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December 1, 2002 Grain Stocks

For immediate release: January 10, 2003
For more information contact: Thomas Chard or Peggy Stringer at 1-800-835-2612.

Stocks of all wheat in Montana on December 1, 2002 were 112.4 million bushels, up 3 percent from December 1, 2001, according to the Montana Agricultural Statistics Service. All wheat stocks stored on the farm amounted to 87.0 million bushels, up 1 percent from a year ago. All wheat stored off-farm amounted 25.4 million bushels, up 11 percent from a year ago. All wheat disappearance for the September - November 2002 quarter was up 28 percent from the same quarter last year to 26.8 million bushels, compared with 20.9 million a year ago. Wheat stocks by class and by district are no longer available due to funding cuts by the Montana Wheat & Barley Committee.

Barley stocks in all positions on December 1, 2002 were 29.0 million bushels, up 23 percent from a year ago. Barley stored on-farm was 22.0 million bushels, up 29 percent from last year. Off-farm storage of barley was up 6 percent from a year ago at 7.0 million bushels. All barley disappearance for the September - November 2002 quarter was 11.8 million bushels, up 53 percent from a year ago. Oats stocks in all positions were estimated at 2.1 million bushels, up 6 percent from last year. On-farm stocks of oats were 2.0 million bushels up 5 percent from 1.9 million stored a year ago. Oats stored off-farm was up 28 percent from last year to 115,000 bushels.

The on-farm storage capacity of all storage facilities in Montana, normally used for storing grain, was estimated to be 340 million bushels, up 3 percent from a year ago. There were 175 off-farm storage facilities in Montana on December 1, 2002. The storage capacity of off farm facilities was 69.56 million bushels, up 4 percent from a year ago.

In the United States, all wheat stored in all positions on December 1, 2002 totaled 1.32 billion bushels, down 19 percent from a year ago. On-farm stocks are estimated at 385 million bushels, down 26 percent from last year. Off-farm stocks, at 936 million bushels, are down 15 percent from a year ago. The indicated September - November 2002 disappearance is 430 million bushels, down 19 percent from the same period a year earlier. Durum wheat stocks in all positions on December 1, 2002 totaled 75.4 million bushels, down 2 percent from a year ago. On-farm stocks, at 49.5 million bushels, are down slightly from December 1, 2001. Off-farm stocks totaled 25.9 million bushels, down 4 percent from a year ago. The indicated September - November 2002 disappearance of 17.4 million bushels is down 15 percent from the same period a year earlier.

Barley stocks in all positions in the United States on December 1, 2002 totaled 170 million bushels, down 13 percent from December 1, 2001. On-farm stocks are estimated at 83.4 million bushels, 10 percent below a year ago. Off-farm stocks, at 86.6 million bushels, are 16 percent below December 2001. Indicated disappearance during the September - November 2002 quarter totaled 54.0 million bushels, up 7 percent from the same period a year earlier.

U.S. oats stored in all positions on December 1, 2002 totaled 104 million bushels, 9 percent below the stocks on December 1, 2001. Of the total stocks on hand, 52.3 million bushels are stored on farms, 10 percent less than a year ago. Off-farm stocks totaled 51.3 million bushels, 9 percent below a year earlier. Indicated disappearance during September - November 2002 totaled 8.12 million bushels, up 5.94 million from the same period a year ago.

Corn stocks in all positions in the United States on December 1, 2002 totaled 7.63 billion bushels, down 8 percent from December 1, 2001. Of the total stocks, 4.80 billion bushels are stored on farms, down 9 percent from a year earlier. Off-farm stocks, at 2.83 billion bushels, are down 5 percent from the previous year. The September - November 2002 indicated disappearance is 2.97 billion bushels, compared with 3.14 billion bushels during the same period last year.

The United States on-farm storage capacity totaled 11.2 billion bushels on December 1, 2002, up slightly from December 1, 2001. The top five States account for 52 percent of the Nation's on-farm storage capacity. On-farm grain storage capacity includes all bins, cribs, sheds, and other structures normally used to store whole grains or oilseeds located on farms.

Capacity of off-farm commercial grain storage totaled 8.51 billion bushels in the United States on December 1, 2002, up 1 percent from December 1, 2001. Twenty three States showed increases from a year earlier, 12 States and New England recorded decreases in capacity, and five States were unchanged. Off-farm storage facilities totaled 9,521 on December 1, 2002, down 2 percent from December 1, 2001.

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2002 Late Season Crops Summary

For immediate release: January 10, 2003
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Montana producers planted 65,000 acres of **corn** in 2002, unchanged from 2001, according to the Montana Agricultural Statistics Service. Acres harvested for grain were 13,000 acres, identical to last year's figure. The average yield was 140.0 bushels per acre, down 8 bushels from last year. Grain production declined 5 percent from a year ago to 1.820 million bushels due to a reduction in yield. The number of acres harvested for corn silage decreased 2,000 acres from 2001 to 49,000 acres. Corn silage yield averaged 22 tons per acre, unchanged from a year ago.

Sugar beet producers in Montana planted 58,000 acres in 2002, up 600 acres from last year. Harvested acreage amounted to 55,900 acres, up 2,400 acres from last year's PIK-reduced acreage. A significant amount of acreage was lost this year due to frost and freeze conditions. Yield decreased 1.9 tons from last year to average 19.6 tons per acre. Total production of 1.1 million tons, was down 5 percent from the previous year.

Fall potato production in Montana totaled 3.224 million cwt., down 2 percent from last year. Producers harvested 10,400 acres compared with 10,300 in 2001. Potato yields decreased 10 cwt. from a year ago to 310 cwt. per acre.

All hay harvested in Montana was up 150,000 acres from last year, to 2.60 million acres. All hay production was 4.62 million tons, up 4 percent or 175,000 tons from a year ago. **Alfalfa hay** harvested acreage was 1.40 million, down 50,000 acres from last season. The average yield was 2.1 tons per acre, which is unchanged from the previous year. **Other hay** harvested acreage was 1.20 million, up 200,000 acres from the previous year due to more CRP acres and small grains being cut for hay. The average yield was 1.4 tons per acre, equal to last year's figure.

Montana **hay stocks** were estimated at 4.019 million tons on December 1, up 12 percent from last year, but 5 percent less than the 1992-2001 average stocks held. Montana hay producers seeded an estimated 120,000 acres of alfalfa and alfalfa mixtures during 2002, which is equal to last year's seedings. New seedings include those mixed with a nurse crop, other forage, or direct seedings.

U.S. **corn for grain** production is estimated at 9.01 billion bushels, virtually unchanged from the November forecast but down 5 percent from the 9.51 billion bushels produced in 2001. The average U.S. grain yield is estimated at 130.0 bushels per acre, 2.4 bushels above the November forecast but down 8.2 bushels from 2001.

U.S. sugarbeet production is estimated at 27.6 million tons, 2 percent below the November 1 forecast but 7 percent above last year's production. Growers in the 12 sugarbeet-producing States harvested 1.36 million acres, slightly above the November estimate and 9 percent above last year's 1.24 million acres. The yield is estimated at 20.3 tons per acre, 0.4 ton below both the November forecast and the 2001 yield.

Production of **fall potatoes** in the U.S. for 2002 is forecast at 417 million cwt, up fractionally from the December forecast and 6 percent above last year. However, this is 11 percent smaller than the record high 2000 crop. Area harvested, at 1.11 million acres, is up 4 percent from last year but 6 percent below two years ago. The average yield is estimated at 374 cwt per acre, 7 cwt above last year. Production estimates are generally lower this year in Central and Eastern States but higher in the West.

U.S. **all hay production** for 2002 is estimated at 151 million tons, up slightly from the October 1 forecast but down 4 percent from the 2001 total. Acreage harvested, at 64.5 million acres, is down less than 1 percent from the October forecast but up 2 percent from 2001. The average yield, at 2.34 tons per acre, is up 0.02 ton from the October forecast but down 0.13 ton from the previous year.

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2002 Oilseeds Summary

For immediate release: January 10, 2003
For more information contact: Eric Siebens or Curtis Lund at 1-800-835-2612

Montana's **flaxseed** production for 2002 was 195,000 bushels, 15,000 bushels higher than last year's figure, according to the Montana Agricultural Statistics Service. Planted and harvested acreages were 17,000 and 15,000, respectively, compared to 2001, when growers planted 14,000 acres and harvested 12,000. The average yield for 2002 was 13.0 bushels per acre, two bushels better than the previous year. Production of **mustard seed** in Montana during 2002 was 11.0 million pounds compared with 8.5 million in 2001. Mustard plantings were set at 27,000 acres with 25,000 acres harvested. During 2001 Montana producers planted 11,000 acres of mustard seed and harvested 10,000 acres. Mustard seed yields averaged 440 pounds per acre this year, which is 410 pounds per acre less than 2001. Montana **canola** growers planted 37,500 acres in 2002, 20,500 acres less than 2001. Of the acres planted, 34,500 were harvested which is 15,000 lower than last year. During the 2002 season canola yield was 860 pounds per acre, down 10 pounds per acre over last year.

Growers produced 30.40 million pounds of **safflower** in Montana during 2002. Safflower plantings in Montana total 39,500 acres with 38,000 acres harvested and a yield of 800 pounds per acre. The 2001 safflower crop produced more than 23.8 million pounds from 31,000 planted and 28,000 harvested acres. During 2001 safflower yield was 850 lbs. per acre.

Montana's 2002 all **sunflower** production was set at 931,000 pounds this year, compared with 740,000 pounds produced in 2001. The state planted 1,700 acres and harvested 1,600 acres in 2002, compared to 2001 when planted acreage was 2,500 and harvested was 2,000. The average yield is 580 pounds per acre, compared to 370 pounds per acres in 2001.

U.S. production of **flaxseed** in 2002 totaled 12.6 million bushels, up 10 percent from the previous year. The yield is estimated at 17.9 bushels, down 1.9 bushels from last year's yield and down 2.9 bushels from the record high yield in 2000. The total of 785,000 acres planted is up 34 percent from 2001. Area harvested, at 704,000 acres, is a 22 percent increase from 2001.

Safflower production in the United States, at 298 million pounds, is up 23 percent from 2001. **Mustard seed** production, at 123 million pounds, is more than triple the previous year due to increased acreage.

U.S. **canola** production in 2002, is 1.55 billion pounds, down 22 percent from the record production in 2001. Canola yield, at 1,218 pounds, decreased 156 pounds from last year. Decreases in both harvested acres and yield contributed to the decline in production. Area planted to canola is estimated at 1.46 million acres, 2 percent below last year's acreage. Harvested area, at 1.28 million acres, is down 12 percent from 2001. Production in North Dakota, the leading State, is estimated at 1.43 billion pounds, down 21 percent from 2001. This decrease is due to a frost in late May combined with damaging winds.

The 2002 U.S. **sunflower** production totaled 2.50 billion pounds, 27 percent below the 2001 production. The estimated yield per acre, at 1,133 pounds, decreased 205 pounds from the previous year. Planted area, at 2.59 million acres, is down 2 percent from last year. Harvested acres, at 2.21 million, declined 14 percent from last year.

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2002 Pulse Crops Summary

For immediate release: January 10, 2003
For more information contact: John Gibbons or Curtis Lund at 1-800-835-2612

Montana's **dry bean** growers produced 361,000 cwt. in 2002, down 4 percent from 2001, according to the Montana Agricultural Statistics Service. Producers planted 26,900 acres of beans this year, down 38 percent from last year, driven mostly by a significant reduction in garbanzo bean acreage. Growers harvested 23,000 acres, which yielded 1,570 lbs. per acre, compared with last year's 28,500 acres harvested and the average yield of 1,320 lbs. per acre. **Pinto bean** production in 2002 was 287,000 cwt., which is 44 percent better than last year's figure. Planted acreage was 13,500, up 2,000 acres from last year. Harvested acreage, at 12,900 acres, is 29 percent above the previous year. The yield was 2,220 lbs. per acre, which is 220 pounds more than last year. The production estimate for **garbanzo beans**, at 71,000 cwt., is 58 percent lower than last year due to decreased acreage. Planted acreage was 12,700, down from 18,800 acres last year. Harvested area was 9,600 acres, down 8,400 acres from last year. Because of the drought, many producers chose to graze or hay their fields. The yield was 740 pounds per acre, down from last year's 950 pounds per acre.

Dry edible pea production for 2002 in Montana was 205,000 cwt., down 18 percent from 2001. Planted and harvested acreages are estimated at 32,000 and 27,000 acres, respectively. In 2001, growers planted 26,000 acres and harvested 16,500. Average yield was 760 lbs. per acre, which is 50 percent below last year. Dry edible pea numbers no longer include desi chickpeas acreage. Previous years have been revised to exclude desis from the dry edible pea estimate. Desi chick peas are now a component of the garbanzo bean estimate. **Austrian winter pea** production in 2002 was 20,000 cwt., which is equal to last year's figure. Planted acreage was 9,500, down 400 acres from last year. Harvested acreage, at 3,500, is 1,000 acres above the previous year. The yield was 580 lbs. per acre, which is 210 pounds less than last year. Austrian winter peas are grown primarily as a forage or hay crop in the state, which accounts for the high level of abandonment.

Montana's 2002 production of **lentils** was 149,000 cwt., down 32 percent from 2001. Planted area was 25,000 acres and harvested acres are set at 21,000. The 2001 acreage numbers are 22,000 and 20,000, respectively. The average yield was 710 lbs. per acre, or 390 pounds less than in 2001.

U.S. **dry edible bean** production is estimated at 30.0 million cwt for 2002, down 1 percent from the December forecast but 53 percent above last year. This increase is a rebound from last year's drought reduced production in eastern and central States. Harvested area is estimated at 1.73 million acres, 38 percent above 2001. The average U.S. yield of 1,736 pounds per acre is 167 pounds greater than a year ago.

Production of **dry edible peas** in Idaho, Montana, North Dakota, Oregon, and Washington is estimated at 4.24 million cwt for 2002, up 2 percent from the November 1 forecast and 13 percent above the revised 2001 total. Area harvested, at 279,700 acres, is 4 percent above the previous forecast and 45 percent above 2001. Average yield, at 1,517 pounds per acre, decreased 44 pounds from the November 1 forecast and is 440 pounds below 2001. Production of **Austrian winter peas** in Idaho, Montana, and Oregon for the 2002 season is estimated at 164,000 cwt, up 36 percent from the November 1 forecast and 69 percent above 2001. Area harvested, at 11,600 acres, is 36 percent above the previous forecast and 63 percent above last year. Average yield, at 1,414 pounds per acre, decreased 10 pounds from the November 1 forecast but is 48 pounds above 2001.

Production of **lentils** in Idaho, Montana, North Dakota, and Washington is estimated at 2.51 million cwt for 2002, up 8 percent from the November 1 forecast but 13 percent below 2001. Planted area, at 221,000 acres, is up 9 percent from the previous forecast and 10 percent above 2001. Harvested area, at 209,000 acres, is 8 percent above the November 1 forecast and 6 percent above last year. Average yield per acre, at 1,200 pounds, is 5 pounds below November's forecast and 271 pounds below last year.

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Montana Winter Wheat Seedings for 2003 Crop Year up 21 Percent

For immediate release: January 10, 2003
For more information please contact: Thomas Chard or Peggy Stringer at 1-800-835-2612.

Montana producers seeded 1.75 million acres of winter wheat this fall for the 2003 crop year, up 300,000 acres or 21 percent from the 2002 crop, according to the Montana Agricultural Statistics Service. This would be the largest planted acreage since 1996, but down from the 1987-96 average of 2.32 million acres planted.

Winter wheat seeding progressed rapidly as conditions this fall were favorable for planting. By the end of October, 98% of the winter wheat acres were seeded, 2 points ahead of the 5 year average. Emergence reached 80% by the end of October compared with 72% for last year and 73% for the 5 year average. Protectiveness of snow cover was rated 97% very poor, 2% poor, and 1% fair for the month ending December 31, 2002 due to the lack of snow received so far this season. The condition of the winter wheat crop has deteriorated since planting, however it is still rated better than a year ago at this time. The condition of the winter wheat crop was rated 1% very poor, 25% poor, 55% fair, 18% good, and 1% excellent for the end of December 2002 compared with 8% very poor, 41% poor, 49% fair, 2% good a year ago.

Winter wheat seedings in the United States for 2003 is estimated at 44.2 million acres. This is up 6 percent from 2002 and is the largest acreage since 1998. Hard red winter (HRW) wheat seeded area is about 32.1 million acres, up 8 percent from 2002. Significant acreage increases are reported in all major HRW States. Two major factors, high prices at the time of seeding and last year's drought, contributed to the larger acreage. Prices were very strong this fall, especially during September and October when most of the winter wheat was planted. Last year's drought left soil moisture supplies low. Wheat requires less moisture than many alternate crops in the major HRW States, making it a more appealing option. Additionally, the drought left forage supplies limited, therefore many growers in the southern Great Plains planted wheat in hopes that enough moisture would be received to provide grazing.

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Alfalfa Seed Production Down 58 Percent From 2001

For immediate release: February 12, 2003
For more information please contact: Peggy Stringer or John Gibbons at 1-800-835-2612.

Alfalfa seed production for 2002 was estimated at 1.383 million pounds, down 58 percent from the 3.30 million pounds produced last year. Harvested acreage, at 5,000, was down from 9,000 acres in 2001. The state average yield was estimated at 277 pounds per acre, down from 367 pounds per acre a year ago. Irrigated yield averaged 412 pounds per acre, down from 477 pounds per acre in 2001 and non-irrigated yields averaged 56 pounds per acre, up 12 pounds per acre from last year.

Producers used an average of 3.0 gallons of leaf cutter bees per acre harvested for alfalfa seed in 2002, compared with 2.1 gallons per acre in 2001. Leaf cutter bees were used on 72 percent of the reported irrigated acres at the rate of 3.6 gallons per acre and 12 percent of the reported non-irrigated acres at the rate of 2.0 gallons per acre. Alfalfa seed growers who utilized leaf cutter bees produced an average of 5 percent more seed per acre irrigated acre and 105 percent more per non-irrigated acre than those that did not use bees to pollinate their crop.

Proprietary varieties made up 68 percent of this year's production, down 20 percentage points from last year. Common uncertified varieties accounted for 31 percent of the production and common certified varieties represented 1 percent.

The average price received for the 2002 crop was $1.15 per pound, down 12 cents from last years's average price.

Montana's north-central district lead regional production by harvesting 36.2 percent of the state's alfalfa seed. The south-central district was the second largest production area with 28.0 percent.

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2002 Crop Values

For immediate release: February 13, 2003
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The value of Montana's 2002 **all wheat** crop rose 54 percent from 2001 to $466.7 million. Total production was up 14 percent and the season average price increased $1.11 per bushel. The 2002 season average price for all wheat was $4.25 per bushel compared with $3.14 last season.

The value of Montana's **winter wheat** crop increased 39 percent from last year to $81.9 million. The preliminary season average price was up 83 cents to $3.90 per bushel. **Spring wheat's** value of production was at $326.4 million, up 63 percent from 2001. The season average price increased $1.24 per bushel to $4.30. **Durum wheat's** season average price increased 70 cents from 2001 to $4.50 per bushel. The total crop value of $58.5 million was up 30 percent from 2001 and is the highest durum wheat value of production on record.

The value of Montana's **oats** crop increased 15 percent from 2001 to $5.39 million. The season average price increased 4 cents to $2.00 per bushel. Total value of production for **barley** was estimated at $115.7 million, up 48 percent from the previous year. The 2002 season average price, at $2.90, was up 25 cents from 2001.

Montana's value of production for **flaxseed** increased 53 percent to $1.2 million dollars. The price per bushel increased $1.80 to $6.15. **Dry edible beans** value of production was estimated at $5.5 million, down 16 percent from 2001. The average price dropped $2.10 per cwt to $15.20.

Value of production for **dry edible peas** in Montana, at $1.42 million, increased 16 percent from 2001. The average price per cwt increased $2.00 to $6.90. **Austrian winter peas** value of production for the 2002 crop decreased 15 percent to $187,000. The average price per cwt was $9.35, down $1.65 from last year. Lentils value of production dropped 23 percent from 2001 to $1.86 million. The average price increased $1.50 to $12.50 per cwt.

Montana's value of production for **potatoes** was $36.75 million, up 22 percent from the previous year. The average price per cwt was $11.40, $2.25 above 2001. **Sugar beets** value of production for 2001 is estimated at $44.62 million, down 3 percent from the previous year. The season average price jumped $4.10 per cwt from 2000 to $38.80.

The season average price for **all hay** decreased $10.00 from last year to $84.00 per ton. The value of production was down 8 percent to $379.1 million. **Alfalfa hay's** 2002 season average price was estimated at $85.50, down $10.00 from last year while **other hay's** season average price decreased $11.00 to $76.00.

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2002 Montana Sheep and Lamb Losses

For immediate release: February 21, 2003
For more information contact: John Gibbons or Peggy Stringer at 1-800-835-2612

Montana sheep and lamb producers lost 67,000 animals to weather, predators, disease and other causes during 2002, representing a total value of more than $4.1 million, according to a survey conducted by the Montana Agricultural Statistics Service. While the total number of sheep and lambs lost increased only 1,000 head from last year, the total value of inventory lost was 29 percent higher than a year ago. Higher average market prices this past year resulted in an increase to sheep and lamb values. Total inventory is 7 percent lower than the previous year. Sheep and lamb deaths amounted to 9.9 percent of the January 1 inventory and lambs born -- slightly more than the previous year.

The number of sheep and lambs lost to all predators totaled 21,400 head, up 1,500 head from last year. Lamb losses by all predators amounted to 16,500 head, down 2 percent from last year. The number of sheep lost to all predators totaled 4,900, up 1,800 head from a year ago. Predators caused an estimated $1.3 million in losses in 2002, up 50 percent from the previous year. Losses due to predators amounted to 3.2 percent of the January 1 inventory and lambs born and 32 percent of all sheep and lamb deaths. Coyotes remained the largest predator for both sheep and lambs. Coyotes accounted for 65 percent of the predator caused losses and 21 percent of all death losses in the state. The value of losses attributed to coyotes was $809,200.

The total value of non-predatory losses was $2.5 million in 2002, 24 percent above the previous year. Non-predatory losses accounted for 60 percent of all losses. The largest non-predatory cause of losses was weather conditions at 13,400 head. Sheep lost to non-predatory factors totaled 10,900 head, 19 percent higher than 2001. Non-predatory lamb losses came in at 29,000 head, 3,900 head higher than a year ago.

Producers reported less sheep and lambs lost to unknown causes this past year. This resulted in a 24 percent decrease in the number of sheep and lambs lost to unknown causes from last year. Lambs lost to unknown causes totaled 3,500 head, compared with 5,100 head last year. Unknown causes claimed 2,200 sheep, 200 head less than last year. The value of sheep and lambs lost to unknown causes was $384,200.

The full release which includes tables can be found on our website at www.nass.usda.gov/mt/ under press releases or contact our office for a printed copy at 1-800-835-2612 or 441-1240.

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Wheat, Barley, and Oat County Estimates for 2002 Now Available

For immediate release: February 21, 2003
For more information please contact: Thomas Chard or Peggy Stringer at 1-800-835-2612.

The 2002 crop year county estimates for barley, oats, all wheat, winter wheat, durum wheat and spring wheat are now available. Estimates are made for acres planted, acres harvested for grain, average yield per harvested acre and production. Estimates are made by practices for irrigated crops and non-irrigated crops as well as crops that were re-cropped or continuously cropped and non-irrigated crops harvested from previously fallowed acres. Oats county estimates are estimated by practice of irrigated and non-irrigated only. These estimates are available on our website http:// www.nass.usda.gov/mt/ or they can be requested by calling or writing our office.

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2002 Montana and U.S. Honey Production

For immediate release: February 28, 2003
For more information contact: Thomas Chard or Peggy Stringer at 1-800-835-2612.

Honey produced in Montana by producers with five or more colonies during 2002 was 8.4 million pounds of honey, down 39 percent from 2001, according to the Montana Agricultural Statistics Service. The estimate of honey production and colonies includes production by colonies that were in the state for part of the year. There were 134,000 colonies producing honey in 2002, compared with 136,000 colonies in 2001. The honey yield per colony was 63 pounds, down 39 pounds from a year ago. Stocks on hand on December 15, 2002 totaled 1.1 million pounds, down 3.5 million pounds from 2001. The improved honey prices resulted in lower percentage of the honey crop on hand December 15, 2002.

Prices for Montana honey increased 68 cents per pound from last year to $1.35 per pound in 2002. The value of 2002 honey production was $11.4 million dollars, up 23 percent from last year.

U.S. honey production in 2002 from producers with five or more colonies totaled 171 million pounds, down 8 percent from 2001. There were 2.52million colonies producing honey in 2002, up 1 percent from 2001. Yield per colony averaged 67.8 pounds, down 8 percent from the 74.0 pounds in 2001. Colonies which produced honey in more than one State were counted in each State and yields per colony may therefore be understated. Colonies were not included if honey was not harvested. Producer honey stocks were 39.0 million pounds on December 15, 2002, down 40 percent from a year earlier. Stocks held by producers exclude stocks held under the commodity loan program.

Honey prices for the U.S. increased to a record high during 2002 to 128.6 cents, up 83 percent from 70.4 cents in 2001. Prices are based on retail sales by producers and sales to private processors and cooperatives. State level honey prices reflect the portions of honey sold through retail, co-op and private channels. U.S. honey prices for each color class are derived by weighing quantities sold for each marketing channel at the U.S. level. Honey prices for 2002 were higher than the previous year for all color classes. Some 2001 crop honey was sold at the higher prices in 2002, which caused some revisions to the 2001 crop prices.

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Agricultural Prices Received for January 2003

For immediate release: February 28, 2003
For more information contact: Eric Siebens or Peggy Stringer at 1-800-835-2612.

January 2003 full month crop prices were lower compared with December 2002, according to the Montana Agricultural Statistics Service. Montana's winter wheat average price was $3.97 per bushel, down $0.27 from the previous month; spring wheat prices fell $0.33 to $4.15 per bushel; and durum wheat prices decreased $0.05 to $4.62 per bushel. Feed barley prices dropped $0.03 from the previous month to $2.21, and malt barley prices fell $0.11 to $3.12 per bushel.

The mid-February price for alfalfa hay was down $5.00 to $82.00 per ton and all other hay decreased $3.00 to $73.00 per ton. Mid-February grain prices were mostly lower than the previous month with winter wheat price averaging $3.69 per bushel, spring wheat was $4.11 per bushel, durum wheat was $4.34 per bushel, feed barley was $2.21 per bushel and malt barley averaged $3.05 per bushel.

Livestock prices for the full month of January were mostly higher than the previous month. Steer and heifer prices decreased $0.80 to $82.70 per cwt, while cows increased $1.40 to $37.40. The average price for calves increased $1.20 to $95.80 per cwt. Sheep prices rose $2.90 to $43.50 per cwt and lamb prices moved up $9.00 to $103.00 per cwt. Milk prices increased $0.70 per cwt from last month to $12.80 per cwt. Steer and heifer prices for mid-February averaged $81.10 per cwt.; cows averaged $41.00 per cwt.; calves averaged $96.30 per cwt.; and milk prices averaged $12.60 per cwt.

Nationally, prices for January and changes from December were as follows: winter wheat was $3.66, down $0.19, spring wheat was $4.04, down $0.16; durum wheat was $4.23, down $0.01; the all barley price was $2.85, down $0.18, and steer and heifer prices were $77.80, up $2.70 per cwt.

The U.S. mid-February winter wheat price was $3.53 per bushel, spring wheat was $3.93 per bushel, durum wheat was $4.17 per bushel, all wheat was $3.71 per bushel, malt barley was $3.13 per bushel, feed barley was $2.23 per bushel, and all barley was $2.85. Steer and heifer prices were $78.90 per cwt, cow prices were $38.10, calves were $97.60 per cwt., all hog prices were $34.40 per cwt, and all egg prices were $0.640 per dozen.

The preliminary All Farm Products Index of Prices Received by Farmers in February is 99, based on 1990-92=100, unchanged from the January index. Higher prices for cattle, hogs, corn, and soybeans offset lower prices for tomatoes, broilers, wheat, and eggs. The seasonal change in the mix of commodities farmers sell also affects the overall index. Increased marketings of cattle, broilers, eggs, and strawberries offset decreased marketings of corn, soybeans, wheat, and oranges.

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Farm Numbers up and Land in Farms Steady in 2002

For immediate release: February 28, 2003
For more information contact: Curt Lund or Peggy Stringer at 1-800-835-2612.

The number of farms and ranches in Montana increased to 28,000 during 2002, 500 more than the revised number of farms a year earlier, according to the Montana Agricultural Statistics Service. Farms and ranches are sub-grouped by economic sales classes which give a clearer picture of where the changes occurred. The smallest economic sales category, the $1,000 to $9,999 sales group showed the biggest increase with 500 more farms in 2002, up from 11,000 farms in 2001. With 11,500 farms, the $1,000 to $9,999 sales group contains the largest number of farms. Although many producers in this class left agriculture altogether, the total number of operators in this group increased due to poor economic conditions in 2002. The next economic sales category, $10,000 to $99,999, shows 9,900 farms in 2002 compared with 10,000 in 2001 and the economic sales class of $100,000 or more increased 100 farms from 2001 to 6,600 farms in 2002.

The land in farms and ranches is estimated at 56.7 million acres, unchanged from the previous two years. The economic sales breakdown of land in farm and ranches follows: $1,000 to $9,999 - 3.5 million acres compared with 3.7 million in 2001; $10,000 to $99,999 - 15.7 million acres, down from 15.9 million last year; $100,000 or more of sales - 37.5 million acres, up from the 37.1 million acres in 2001. These numbers show that producers are shifting between sales categories with many moving into lower value of sales and others increasing their size of farms and value of sales. The acreage increase in the largest economic sales category reflects the consolidation of operations that were necessary to compete in today's tough agricultural environment.

This report includes the first break out for the number of farms and ranches and the acres of land in the sales category of $100,000 or more. The new numbers are included in the category of $100,000+ shown above. The $100,000 to $249,999 sales category has 4,000 farms and ranches and 19.0 million acres of land; the $250,000 to $499,999 sales category has 1,800 farms and ranches and 11.5 million acres of land; and the $500,000 plus sales category includes 800 farms and ranches and 7.0 million acres of land.

The number of farms in the United States in 2002 is estimated at 2.16 million, up 0.1 percent from 2001. The increase in farms occurred primarily in agricultural operations with $1,000-$9,999 in sales. Total land in farms, at 941.5 million acres, increased 170,000 acres from last year. The average size of farm at 436 acres, decreased one acre from 2001. The increase in the number of farms and land in farms primarily resulted from the inclusion of pasture only farms in 2002.

The U.S. number of agricultural operations in the economic sales class $1,000-$9,999 increased 1.0 percent to 1,172,770 in 2002. Farms with sales in the $10,000-$99,999 economic class decreased 0.9% from 2001 to 637,160 operations. The number of farms with sales over $100,000 at 348,160 decreased 1.1 percent. Dry weather, below normal yields, and lower commodity prices contributed to the shifting of farms among the economic sales classes. Texas, which leads the Nation in acres in farms with 131 million acres, increased agricultural acreage during 2002 adding 1.0 million acres. States with decreases in land in farms were; Wisconsin, down 200,000 acres, and Arizona, Iowa, Minnesota, Missouri, Ohio, and Tennessee which declined 100,000 acres. Other states losing agricultural acreage were Delaware, New Hampshire, and New Jersey, each down 10,000 acres.

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Annual Red Meat Production for 2002

For immediate release: March 7, 2003
For more information please contact: Eric Siebens or Peggy Stringer at 1-800-835-2612

Montana slaughter plants produced 16.8 million pounds, dressed weight, of red meat during 2002, compared with 16.4 million pounds in 2001, according to the Montana Agricultural Statistics Service. There were 20,200 cattle slaughtered during 2002, up 2 percent from the previous year. The total live weight of 23.3 million pounds was up 2 percent from a year earlier. The average live weight was up 3 pounds to 1,152 pounds.

There were 15,000 hogs slaughtered in Montana, an increase of 1,300 head from 2001. Total live weight at 3.5 million pounds was up 6 percent from the last year. The average live weight was 236 pounds per head compared with 244 the previous year. Sheep slaughter amounted to 3,800 head, an increase of 200 head from a year earlier. The average live weight at 122 pounds was 2 pounds heavier than the previous year. Total live weight of all sheep and lambs slaughtered in 2002 increased 9 percent from 2001 to 465,000 pounds.

The number of federally inspected slaughter plants in Montana on January 1, 2003 was 10, down one plant from 2001. There were 147 non-federally inspected plants on January 1, 2003, up 8 from the same date a year ago.

Red meat production in commercial plants and on farms for the United States totaled 47.3 billion pounds in 2002, a new record high. Red meat includes beef, veal, pork, and lamb and mutton. Red meat production in commercial plants totaled 47.2 billion pounds.

Beef production, at 27.2 billion pounds, rose 1 percent above the previous record high set in 2000. Veal production totaled 205.2 million pounds, up 1 percent from the record low set last year. Pork production, at 19.7 billion pounds, was 2 percent above the record high set in 1999. Lamb and mutton production totaled 222.2 million pounds, falling 3 percent below the previous record low set a year ago.

Commercial cattle slaughter during 2002 totaled 35.7 million head, up 1 percent from 2001, with federal inspection comprising 98.3 percent of the total. The average live weight was 1,251 pounds, up 30 pounds from a year ago. Steers comprised 49.9 percent of the total federally inspected slaughter, heifers 32.3 percent, dairy cows 7.4 percent, other cows 8.7 percent, and bulls 1.7 percent.

Commercial calf slaughter totaled 1.05 million head, up 4 percent from a year ago with 97.5 percent under federal inspection. The average live weight was 312 pounds, down 8 pounds from a year earlier.

Commercial hog slaughter totaled 100.3 million head, up 2 percent from 2001, with 98.7 percent of the hogs slaughtered under federal inspection. The average live weight, at 265 pounds, was up 1 pound from last year. Barrows and gilts comprised 96.5 percent of the total federally inspected slaughter.

Commercial sheep and lamb slaughter, totaled 3.29 million head, up 2 percent from 2001, with 94.1 percent comprised by federal inspection. The average live weight fell 7 pounds from 2001 to 133 pounds.

There were 879 slaughtering plants under federal inspection on January 1, 2003 compared with 881 last year. Of these, 706 slaughtered at least one head of cattle during 2002 with 15 slaughtering over 56 percent of the total cattle killed. There were 683 plants that slaughtered hogs, with 13 accounting for 57 percent of the total. Likewise, 6 of the 268 plants that slaughtered calves accounted for 49 percent of the total and 7 of the 525 plants that slaughtered sheep or lambs in 2002 comprised 80 percent of the total head. Iowa, Kansas, Nebraska, and Texas accounted for over 52 percent of the United States commercial red meat production in 2002.

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March 1, 2003 Grain Stocks

For immediate release: March 31, 2003
For more information contact: Thomas Chard or Peggy Stringer at 1-800-835-2612.

Stocks of all wheat in Montana on March 1, 2003 were 72.7 million bushels, down 12 percent from a year ago, according to the Montana Agricultural Statistics Service. All wheat stocks stored on the farm amounted to 49.0 million bushels, down 21 percent from a year ago. All wheat stored off-farm amounted 23.7 million bushels, up 13 percent from a year ago. All wheat disappearance for the December - February 2003 quarter was up 53 percent from the same quarter last year to 39.8 million bushels, compared with 26.0 million a year ago.

Barley stocks in all positions on March 1, 2003 were 15.0 million bushels, slightly higher than a year ago. Barley stored on-farm was 8.5 million bushels, up 6 percent from last year. Off-farm storage of barley was down 7 percent from a year ago at 6.5 million bushels. All barley disappearance for the December - February 2003 quarter was 13.9 million bushels, up 62 percent from a year ago. Oats stocks in all positions were estimated at 1.7 million bushels, down 7 percent from last year. On-farm stocks of oats were 1.6 million bushels down 6 percent from 1.7 million stored a year ago. Oats stored off-farm was down 23 percent from last year to 115,000 bushels.

All wheat stored in the United States on March 1, 2003 totaled 905 million bushels, down 25 percent from a year ago. On-farm stocks are estimated at 233 million bushels, down 31 percent from last year. Off-farm stocks, at 672 million bushels, are down 23 percent from a year ago. The indicated December 2002 - February 2003 disappearance is 415 million bushels, up slightly from the same period a year earlier. U.S. durum wheat stocks in all positions on March 1, 2003 totaled 56.5 million bushels, up 9 percent from a year ago. On-farm stocks, at 31.7 million bushels, are up 5 percent from March 1, 2002. Off-farm stocks totaled 24.8 million bushels, up 15 percent from a year ago. The indicated December 2002 - February 2003 disappearance of 20.2 million bushels is down 18 percent from the same period a year earlier.

U.S. barley stocks in all positions on March 1, 2003 totaled 124 million bushels, down 13 percent from March 1, 2002. On-farm stocks are estimated at 36.7 million bushels, 20 percent below a year ago. Off-farm stocks, at 86.8 million bushels, are 9 percent below March 1, 2002. Indicated disappearance during the December 2002 - February 2003 quarter totaled 46.5 million bushels, down 13 percent from the same period a year earlier.

Oats stored in the United States on March 1, 2003 totaled 82.4 million bushels, 12 percent below the stocks on March 1, 2002. Of the total stocks on hand, 35.0 million bushels are stored on farms, 13 percent less than a year ago. Off-farm stocks totaled 47.4 million bushels, 11 percent below a year earlier. Indicated disappearance during December 2002 - February 2003 totaled 21.3 million bushels, up 2 percent from the same period a year ago

Corn stocks in all positions on March 1, 2003 totaled 5.13 billion bushels, down 11 percent from March 1, 2002. Of the total stocks, 2.94 billion bushels are stored on farms, down 12 percent from a year earlier. Off-farm stocks, at 2.19 billion bushels, are down 10 percent from the previous year. The December 2002 - February 2003 indicated disappearance is 2.51 billion bushels, compared with 2.47 billion bushels during the same period last year.

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March 1, 2003 Prospective Plantings

For immediate release: March 31, 2003
For more information contact: Thomas Chard or Peggy Stringer at 1-800-835-2612.

Montana **spring wheat** producers expect to seed 3.1 million acres in 2003 down 17 percent from last year, according to the Montana Agricultural Statistics Service. If these expectations hold, spring wheat seedings would be smallest acreage since 1993. Last years acreage was significantly impacted by the large number of acres of winter wheat abandoned and reseeded to spring wheat. Producer comments indicate that it is too early to tell how much winter wheat acreage will end up being abandoned and reseeded to spring wheat. **Winter wheat** seedings, at 1.85 million acres, are up 28 percent from last year due to more favorable fall planting conditions. Winter wheat conditions are better than a year ago and were rated 4% very poor, 18% poor, 60% fair, 16% good and 2% excellent for the month ending February 2003. While conditions are better than a year ago, the lack of precipitation in most areas of the state is a concern for the winter wheat crop breaking dormancy. Producers are expecting to plant 600,000 acres of **durum wheat** this spring, up 2 percent from a year ago. Adding the winter wheat seeded last fall to the other spring and durum wheat intended seedings shows 5.55 million acres of **all wheat** to be planted, down 4 percent from 2002.

Montana **barley** producers intend to plant an estimated 1.2 million acres, unchanged from the previous year. The intended seeded acreage for **oats** is expected to be 135,000 acres, down 10,000 acres from the previous year. Growers intend to harvest 60,000 acres of the 2003 oat crop for grain, 5,000 acres more than a year ago. **Corn** growers intend to plant 60,000 acres, down 5,000 acres from last year. Farmers intend to plant 59,000 acres of **sugar beets**, up 2 percent from 2002. The area planted to **dry beans** is expected to be 25,000 acres, down 7 percent from last year. **Hay** growers are expected to harvest 2.6 million acres, which is unchanged from last year's figure.

In the United States, **all wheat** planted area is expected to total 61.7 million acres in 2003, up 2 percent from 2002. **Winter wheat** planted area for the 2003 crop is 44.3 million acres, up 6 percent from 2002. The 2003 other spring wheat planted acreage is estimated at 14.6 million, down 7 percent from last year. Of the total, about 13.8 million acres are Hard Red **Spring wheat**. Area planted to **Durum wheat** is intended to total 2.83 million acres, down 3 percent from a year ago.

Growers in the United States intend to seed 5.38 million acres of **barley** for 2003, up 6 percent from a year ago. The intended acreage in North Dakota is up 400,000 acres from last year. Acres seeded and to be seeded for **oats** is expected to total 4.83 million, down 4 percent from last year's planted area. Growers expect to harvest 2.20 million acres for grain, 5 percent more than the 2002 harvested acreage of 2.10 million. Growers intend to plant 79.0 million acres of **corn** for all purposes in 2003, virtually unchanged from 2002 but 4 percent above 2001. Area planted to **sugarbeets** for the 2003 crop year is expected to total 1.40 million acres, 2 percent below the 2002 planted area. Prospective plantings of **dry beans** in the U.S. totals 1.52 million acres, down 21 percent from last year but 6 percent above two years ago. Low prices for the 2002 crop pushed planting intentions down in 11 of the 18 major producing States.

U.S. producers expect to harvest 63.6 million acres of **all hay** in 2003, down 1 percent from 2002. Harvested acres for 2003 are expected to decrease in 17 States. North Dakota, down 900,000 acres, has the largest decrease following the drought conditions last year which resulted in more Conservation Reserve Program land and small grain acres harvested for hay.

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Hay County Estimates for 2002 Now Available

For immediate release: April 14, 2003
For more information please contact: John Gibbons or Peggy Stringer at 1-800-835-2612.

The 2002 crop year county estimates for hay are now available from the Montana Agricultural Statistics Service. Estimates are available, by cropping practice, for all hay, alfalfa hay, and other hay, as well as the components of other hay, including wild hay, grain hay, and CRP hay.

Farmers in Beaverhead county produced the most dry hay from the 2002 crop, with 235,600 tons of all hay production. Gallatin county was the second leading hay producing county, cutting 206,900 tons of all hay. Those counties also lead the state in alfalfa hay production, cutting 145,700 tons and 176,100 tons, respectively. These estimates and much more are available on our website at http:// www.nass.usda.gov/mt/,or they can be requested by calling or writing our office.

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Specialty Crop County Estimates for 2002

For immediate release: April 10, 2003
For more information contact: John Gibbons, Eric Siebens or Peggy Stringer at 1-800-835-2612.

The Montana Agricultural Statistics Service released county estimates for the 2002 oilseeds and pulse crops. This is the fourth year of the data series. County-level data is not always published because of established disclosure rules. Funding for these county estimates was provided by the Montana Department of Agriculture.

Dry bean county estimates for Montana are published for the following classes: all, garbanzo, pinto, and other beans. Pinto bean production during 2002 was 287,000 cwt. for the state. **Carbon** county had the most pinto bean production in the state with 60,500 cwt. The second and third leading counties were **Dawson** and **Prairie** with 55,000 cwt. and 42,300 cwt. produced, respectively. The south-central district produced the largest crop of pinto beans followed by the northeastern district. As for garbanzo beans, **Roosevelt** County produced the most in 2002 at 25,600 cwt. The second leading county was **Sheridan** with 16,200 cwt of production. The northeastern district produced the most garbanzo beans in Montana.

Sheridan was the number one lentil producing county again in 2002, with 54,300 cwt. harvested. The number two county was **Roosevelt** with total production of 24,700 cwt., and third was **Daniels** county with 18,300 cwt. Growers from the northeastern district produced 74 percent of the state's lentils. Dry edible pea estimates indicate that **Roosevelt** county was the largest producer in 2002 with 44,900 cwt. grown, followed by **Sheridan** county at 34,600 cwt., and **Dawson** county at 21,600 cwt. Northeastern district farmers produced 73 percent of the state's dry peas. **Richland** was a leading county in Austrian winter pea production during 2002 with 2,900 cwt. Big Horn county was also a leading county but data was not published to avoid disclosure of individual information.

Sheridan was by far the largest canola producing county in 2002 with 10.4 million pounds, or 35 percent of the state's canola. The second largest county was **Daniels** with 4.6 million pounds produced, followed by **Valley** county with 2.9 million pounds. The northeastern district produced 75 percent of the crop. **Roosevelt** was the number one safflower producing county with 7.7 million pounds. The next leading county was **Richland** at 6.3 million pounds, followed by **Dawson**'s production of 4.8 million pounds. Eighty-three percent of the state's safflower was produced in the northeast district.

Sheridan led the state in flaxseed production for 2002 at 78,500 bushels. The next largest county was **Valley** with 55,000 bushels, followed by **Roosevelt** County at 13,500 bushels. Ninety-one percent of the state's flaxseed was produced in the northeast district. The central district accounted for 48 percent of Montana's sunflower production. While the south-central district also produced a large amount of the sunflower crop, data was not published to avoid disclosing individual information. The leading mustard seed producing counties were **Sheridan** with 4.6 million pounds and **Valley** with 2.6 million pounds. Almost all of Montana's mustard seed was produced in the northeast district.

All of the preceding information, plus yield, planted acres, and harvested acres by county, district, and state levels are now available from the Montana Agricultural Statistics Service. They are available in printed form or can be accessed by visiting our website at www.nass.usda.gov/mt/. The Montana Agricultural Statistics Service compiles the only annual county estimates for Montana. These county statistics are based on an acreage and production survey of Montana farmers and ranchers conducted in the fall of 2002. Thanks to those who participated!

#end#

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Agricultural Prices Received for March 2003

For immediate release: April 30, 2003
For more information contact: Eric Siebens or Peggy Stringer at 1-800-835-2612.

March 2003 full month crop prices were mixed compared with February 2003, according to the Montana Agricultural Statistics Service. Montana's winter wheat average price was $3.73 per bushel, unchanged from the previous month; spring wheat price were up $0.11 to $3.95 per bushel; and durum wheat prices decreased $0.01 to $4.74 per bushel. Feed barley prices dropped $0.02 from the previous month to $2.16, and malt barley prices rose $0.18 to $3.33 per bushel.

The mid-April price for alfalfa hay dropped $4.00 to $81.00 per ton and all other hay decreased $3.00 to $69.00 per ton. Mid-April grain prices were mostly lower than the previous month with winter wheat price averaging $3.30 per bushel, spring wheat was $3.74 per bushel, durum wheat was $4.22 per bushel, feed barley was $2.11 per bushel and malt barley averaged $3.29 per bushel.

Livestock prices for the full month of March were mixed compared to the previous month. Steer and heifer prices decreased $3.60 to $76.40 per cwt, while cows decreased $1.00 to $39.80. The average price for calves was unchanged at $93.50 per cwt. Sheep prices were down $0.50 to $43.00 per cwt and lamb prices were up 4.00 to $107.00 per cwt. Milk prices decreased $0.10 per cwt from last month to $11.30 per cwt. Steer and heifer prices for mid-April averaged $83.30 per cwt.; cows averaged $43.50 per cwt.; calves averaged $95.90 per cwt.; and milk prices averaged $11.40 per cwt.

Nationally, prices for March and changes from February were as follows: winter wheat was $3.29, down $0.23, spring wheat was $3.71, down $0.08; durum wheat was $4.14, down $0.10; the all barley price was $2.83, down $0.04, and steer and heifer prices were $76.70, down $1.40 per cwt.

The U.S. mid-April winter wheat price was $3.17 per bushel, spring wheat was $3.57 per bushel, durum wheat was $3.85 per bushel, all wheat was $3.34 per bushel, malt barley was $3.14 per bushel, feed barley was $2.34 per bushel, and all barley was $2.87. Steer and heifer prices were $79.30 per cwt, cow prices were $40.10, calves were $99.10 per cwt., all hog prices were $33.80 per cwt, and all egg prices were $0.520 per dozen.

The April All Farm Products Index is 101 percent of its 1990-92 base, up 2 percent from the March index but 6 percent above the April 2002 index.

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Agricultural Survey is an Opportunity to Provide the Facts

For immediate release: April 30, 2003
For more information contact: Peggy Stringer or Curtis Lund at 1-800-835-2612

(Helena, MT) How many acres will be planted to wheat? What will spring planting conditions mean for Montana agriculture? To gather reliable, objective information, the Montana Agricultural Statistics Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture will be surveying farmers and ranchers for the June Agricultural Survey.

There is always speculation about each new crop season and agricultural producers are the main source for the facts. “When we speak up and answer questions about the 2003 crop season, we can reduce uncertainty in the agricultural marketplace,” says Ralph Peck, Director of the Montana Department of Agriculture.

The Montana Agricultural Statistics Service will be conducting the survey and a representative will contact local producers between May 27 and June 16. This survey is particularly vital because it will provide the first clear indication of the potential production of major commodities in 2003.

Producers rely on the data to reach valid production, marketing, and investment decisions. Industry analysts, extension agents, and farm organizations use the information in a variety of ways that benefit farmers.

“We safeguard the confidentiality of all survey responses,” Peggy Stringer says. “Information from individual operations is combined with other responses to provide the needed data.” NASS works with farmers and ranchers to provide meaningful, accurate, and objective statistics that help keep U.S. agriculture informed.

All agricultural statistics published by NASS are available at www.usda.gov/nass/.

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2002 Cash Receipts for Meat Animals Down 13 Percent from the Previous Year

For immediate release: April 25, 2003
For more information contact: John Gibbons or Peggy Stringer at 1-800-835-2612.

Cash receipts from the 2002 marketings of cattle, hogs, and sheep in Montana totaled $8.97 million, down 13 percent from 2001, according to the Montana Agricultural Statistics Service. Cash receipts from the sales of cattle and calves were down 13 percent from 2001 to 846 million dollars. Decreased cattle marketings and lower prices for cattle contributed to the decrease in cash receipts. Marketings of cattle weighing 500 lbs or more, at 1.33 million head, was down 4 percent from 2001. Marketings of calves weighing less than 500 lbs decreased 10 percent from the previous year to 315,000 head. The average price received in 2002 for cattle weighing over 500 lbs decreased $10.00 per cwt to $70.50 per cwt. Season average prices for calves weighing less than 500 lbs decreased $9.10 per cwt to $90.10 per cwt.

Cash receipts from the sales of hogs in Montana fell 15 percent from 2001 to $29.4 million dollars. Marketings of hogs and pigs rose 3 percent from the previous year to 342,000 head. The average prices received for hogs fell $7.70 from the previous year to $35.90 per cwt. The value of the hog and pig inventory on December 1, 2002 was 13.7 million dollars, up 1 percent from last year.

Sheep and lamb cash receipts in Montana were up 15 percent from the previous year to 21.3 million dollars. Both sheep and lambs experienced a significant increase in price during 2002, with sheep prices rallying during the last quarter, and lamb prices increasing steadily all year. Ultimately though, it was lamb prices that contributed to the large increase in cash receipts over 2001. Marketings of sheep and lambs in 2002 were 70,000 and 247,000 head, respectively. Sheep marketings were down 9,000 head from last year while lamb marketings were down 4,000 head. The average price for lambs rose $20.50 to $80.30 per cwt. while sheep were down $7.30 from last year to $26.60 per cwt. The value of the sheep and lamb inventory was 29.4 million dollars, up 10 percent from the previous year.

Total U.S. 2002 cash receipts from marketings of meat animals decreased 10 percent to $48.0 billion. Cattle and calves accounted for 79 percent of this total, hogs and pigs 20 percent, and sheep and lambs 1 percent. Production increased for hogs and pigs, but decreased for both cattle and calves and sheep and lambs. Average prices were down from 2001 levels for cattle and calves, hogs and pigs, and sheep while lambs showed an increase.

U.S. Cash receipts from marketings of cattle and calves decreased from $40.4 billion in 2001 to $38.0 in 2002, a 6 percent decrease. All cattle and calf marketings totaled 55.9 billion pounds in 2002, up 1 percent from 2001. The U.S. annual average price per 100 pounds live weight for cattle was $66.50 a decrease of $4.80 from 2001. For calves, the annual average price decreased $9.60 to $96.40.

U.S. Cash receipts from hogs and pigs totaled $9.6 billion during 2002, down 23 percent from 2001. Marketings increased to 27.3 billion pounds in 2002, up 2 percent from 2001. The U.S. annual average price per 100 pounds live weight decreased from $44.30 in 2001 to $33.40 in 2002.

U.S. Cash receipts from marketings of sheep and lambs in 2002 were $431 million, up 8 percent from 2001. Marketings increased 2 percent to 652 million pounds. The U.S. annual average price per 100 pounds live weight for sheep decreased from $34.60 in 2001 to $28.20 in 2002 while for lambs, the annual average price increased $7.20 to $74.10.

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May 1 Crop Production and Hay Stocks

For immediate release: May 12, 2003
For more information contact: Thomas Chard II or Peggy Stringer at 1-800-835-2612.

Based on May 1 conditions, **Montana winter wheat** producers are expecting a yield of 36 bushels per acre, up 8 bushels from last year's final yield estimate, according to the Montana Agricultural Statistics Service. If realized, total production of 61.2 million bushels would be up from 21.0 million bushels a year ago due to an increase in acreage and expected yield. In the fall of 2002, Montana producers seeded 1.85 million acres of winter wheat, up 400,000 acres from the previous year. Producers expect to harvest 1.7 million acres, up 950,000 acres from last year. Acreage expected not to be harvested for grain is currently estimated to be 100,000 acres compared with 700,000 acres last year.

As of April 27, Montana's **winter wheat** crop was rated 2% very poor, 8% poor, 25% fair, 51% good, and 14% excellent. This is better than last year's rating of 35% very poor, 30% poor, 25% fair, 9% good, and 1% excellent. All of the winter wheat has broken dormancy and is rated 9% greening, and 91% green and growing, considerably higher than last year's averages of 19% dormant, 52% greening, and 29% green and growing. This year's winter wheat crop broke dormancy significantly faster than last year's crop due to mild temperatures and above average rainfall. Several producers have indicated that this year's crop is the best they have seen in the last 3 to 5 years.

Winter wheat production for the **United States** is forecast at 1.56 billion bushels, up 37 percent from 2002. Based on May 1 conditions, the U.S. yield is forecast at 42.9 bushels per acre, 4.4 bushels more than last year. Grain area totals 36.4 million acres, up 23 percent from last season. Hard Red production is up 55 percent from a year ago to 942 million bushels. Soft Red is up 12 percent and totals 372 million bushels. White production totals 250 million bushels, up 24 percent from a year ago.

By April 27, the **Nation's** winter wheat was 21 percent headed, ahead of last year's pace and the 5-year average of 20 percent. The crop broke dormancy in the northern Rockies and northern Great Plains significantly earlier than last year due to mild temperatures and adequate rainfall. After mid-month, fields quickly entered the heading stage in the southern Great Plains and lower Mississippi Valley despite below normal temperatures. More than half of the crop was headed in Arkansas and Oklahoma under warm, dry conditions. The crop was 90 percent headed in California despite continued cool conditions. In Kansas, the crop was 86 percent jointed on April 27, six percentage points ahead of normal.

On May 1, **Montana hay** producers had an estimated 970 thousand tons of hay on hand 125 thousand tons more than they had on hand a year ago and more than double the stocks from 2001. Increased hay production from CRP and small grain acreage harvested for hay during 2002 and decreased livestock inventories contributed to the increased hay stocks. Disappearance from December 2002 to May 1, 2003 totaled 3.05 million tons, up 10 percent from last year.

All hay stored on farms in the **United States** on May 1, 2003 totaled 22.2 million tons, down 1 percent from the previous year. This decrease was mainly the result of lower hay production in 2002. Disappearance of hay from December 1, 2002 - May 1, 2003, totaled 81.6 million tons, 7 percent less than the disappearance of 88.0 million tons for the same period a year earlier. Disappearance was down from the previous year despite unfavorable winter weather conditions east of the Mississippi River and lingering effects of the drought in the central and northern Great Plains.

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Agricultural Prices Received for April 2003

For immediate release: May 30, 2003
For more information contact: Eric Siebens or Curt Lund at 1-800-835-2612.

April 2003 full month crop prices were mostly down compared with March 2003, according to the Montana Agricultural Statistics Service. Montana's winter wheat average price was $3.32 per bushel, down $0.41 from the previous month; spring wheat price was down $0.26 to $3.69 per bushel; and durum wheat prices decreased $0.47 to $4.27 per bushel. Feed barley prices rose $0.08 from the previous month to $2.24, and malt barley prices dropped $0.10 to $3.23 per bushel.

The mid-May price for alfalfa hay dropped $2.00 to $79.00 per ton and all other hay decreased $1.00 to $68.00 per ton. Mid-May grain prices were mostly higher than the previous month with winter wheat price averaging $3.43 per bushel, spring wheat was $3.70 per bushel, durum wheat was $4.95 per bushel, feed barley was $2.25 per bushel and malt barley averaged $3.43 per bushel.

Livestock prices for the full month of April were mixed compared to the previous month. Steer and heifer prices increased $6.50 to $82.90 per cwt while cows increased $3.70 to $43.50. The average price for calves was rose $1.90 to $95.40 per cwt. Sheep prices were down $14.40 to $31.10 per cwt and lamb prices were down $14.00 to $93.00 per cwt. Milk prices decreased $0.10 per cwt from last month to $11.20 per cwt. Steer and heifer prices for mid-May averaged $84.50 per cwt.; cows averaged $43.40 per cwt.; calves averaged $98.60 per cwt.; and milk prices averaged $11.20 per cwt.

Nationally, prices for April and changes from March were as follows: winter wheat was $3.19, down $0.13, spring wheat was $3.49, down $0.22; durum wheat was $3.98, down $0.16; the all barley price was $2.87, up $0.03, and steer and heifer prices were $78.80, up $2.10 per cwt.

The U.S. mid-May winter wheat price was $3.32 per bushel, spring wheat was $3.61 per bushel, durum wheat was $3.86 per bushel, all wheat was $3.43 per bushel, malt barley was $3.19 per bushel, feed barley was $2.47 per bushel, and all barley was $2.90. Steer and heifer prices were $79.00 per cwt, cow prices were $41.10, calves were $99.30 per cwt., all hog prices were $40.60 per cwt, and all egg prices were $0.587 per dozen.

The May All Farm Products Index is 107 percent of its 1990-92 base, up 6 percent from the April index and 11 percent above the May 2002 index.

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June 1, 2003 Crop Production Forecast

For immediate release: June 11, 2003
For more information contact: Thomas Chard or Peggy Stringer at 1-800-835-2612.

Montana winter wheat producers are expecting a yield of 38 bushels per acre based on June 1 conditions, up 10 bushels from last year and 2 bushels above last month's forecast, according to the Montana Agricultural Statistics Service. Based on the previous month's forecasted harvested acres estimate of 1.7 million acres, total production would be 64.6 million bushels, up from 21.0 million bushels last year.

Winter wheat growing conditions have been favorable for crop development as rainfall has been timely during the month. Condition ratings improved during May and continue to be significantly better than the previous year. For the week ending June 1, the winter wheat crop was rated 1% very poor, 5% poor, 19% fair, 54% good, and 21% excellent. This compares with last years drought devastated crop of 28% very poor, 28% poor, 26% fair, 17% good, and 1% excellent. Forty-five percent of the winter wheat crop was in the boot stage compared to 15% last year and 37% for the 5-year average for the week ending June 1. Winter wheat is just beginning to head.

United States winter wheat production is forecast at 1.63 billion bushels, up 4 percent from the May 1 forecast and 42 percent above 2002. Based on June 1 conditions, the U.S. yield is forecast at 44.6 bushels per acre, up 1.7 bushels from the previous forecast. Grain area totals 36.4 million acres, unchanged from May 1. Hard Red production is up 7 percent from a month ago to 1.01 billion bushels. Soft Red is down 1 percent from last month, and now totals 368 million bushels. White production totals 253 million bushels, up 1 percent from last month.

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Montana Sweet Cherry Production Forecast Down for 2003, U.S. Forecast Up

For immediate release: June 26, 2003
For more information please contact: John Gibbons or Peggy Stringer at 1-800-835-2612.

Montana sweet cherry growers expect to produce a total of 1,800 tons this year, down 19 percent from last year's production of 2,220 tons, and 22 percent less than 2001, according to the Montana Agricultural Statistics Service. Growers in Flathead and Lake counties have seen favorable crop conditions thus far. However, producer comments obtained during the survey period suggest cool weather contributed to poor pollination in some areas, despite good bee populations. Growers expect the outcome of the crop to vary by cherry variety. Montana sweet cherry growers in the Flathead lake region grow a mix of Bing, Black Republican, Lambert, Lapin, Rainier, Skeena, Stella and Van varieties.

U.S. sweet cherry production is forecast at 211,340 tons, up 17 percent from 2002 but 8 percent below 2001. The Washington crop, at 95,000 tons, is up 6 percent from the previous forecast and 10 percent above 2002. Cold spring weather is expected to hold down production for many Washington growers, particularly those located in the Yakima Valley. The sweet cherry crop was adversely affected by poor pollination weather and frost. Production in California is forecast at 60,000 tons, 8 percent more than last year. The California forecast is carried forward from the June Crop Production report. An increase in bearing acreage contributed to the increased California crop. Cool, wet weather slowed crop development and delayed the beginning of harvest by one week. Fruit quality is reported to be excellent. The sweet cherry crop in Oregon is forecast at 40,000 tons, unchanged from the previous forecast but up 29 percent from 2002. Harvest began last week in The Dalles and should begin soon in the Hood River Valley. The crop has enjoyed generally favorable weather throughout the season. Idaho is expecting a sweet cherry crop of 2,500 tons, up 47 percent from last year and 79 percent above 2001. The 2003 sweet cherry crop escaped any major frost damage. Some growers reported cold, rainy weather at bloom. Harvest is expected to peak around June 25. Idaho's 2003 cherry crop will be the largest crop since 2000. Utah is forecasting sweet cherry production to be 2,100 tons, a significant increase over the crops of 2001 and 2002. Although frost caused minor damage in some areas, there was no statewide frost similar to last year.

The Michigan crop is forecast at 9,000 tons, up over 3 fold from last year's weather-devastated crop but 61 percent below 2001. The crop was adversely affected by a harsh winter, and condition of the crop varies across the State. In the northwest, sweet cherry production was reduced by a hard freeze during early March, when significant bud damage was incurred. Producers in the west-central and southwest anticipate a reduced crop due to frost damage. New York production is forecast at 600 tons, 71 percent above the 2002 frost-reduced crop but 45 percent below 2001. An early spring ice storm caused crop loss and tree damage, while poor weather during pollination contributed to a reduced fruit set. Pennsylvania production, at 340 tons, is down 4 percent from 2002 and 41 percent below 2001. Heavier than normal precipitation adversely affected the cherry crop. The constant rain has some producers reporting that a cherry crop that was perfect in May has been reduced in June.

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Agricultural Prices Received for May 2003

For immediate release: June 27, 2003
For more information contact: Eric Siebens or Peggy Stringer at 1-800-835-2612.

May 2003 full month crop prices were mostly lower compared with April 2003, according to the Montana Agricultural Statistics Service. Montana's winter wheat average price was $3.38 per bushel, up $0.06 from the previous month; spring wheat price was down $0.04 to $3.65 per bushel; but durum wheat prices rose $0.10 to $4.37 per bushel. Feed barley prices dropped $0.11 from the previous month to $2.13 and malt barley prices dropped $0.04 to $3.19 per bushel.

The mid-June price for alfalfa hay remained unchanged at $79.00 per ton, but all other hay increased $4.00 to $72.00 per ton. Mid-June grain prices were mixed with winter wheat averaging $3.28 per bushel, spring wheat was $3.45 per bushel, durum wheat was $4.45 per bushel, feed barley was $2.35 per bushel and malt barley averaged $3.15 per bushel.

Livestock prices for the full month of May were mostly higher compared to the previous month. Steer and heifer prices increased $1.10 to $84.00 per cwt while cows increased $2.10 to $45.60. The average price for calves rose $3.60 to $99.00 per cwt. Sheep prices were up $2.80 to $33.90 per cwt and lamb prices rose $7.00 to $100.00 per cwt. Milk prices decreased $0.10 per cwt from April to $11.10 per cwt. Steer and heifer prices for mid-June averaged $81.00 per cwt.; cows averaged $45.20 per cwt.; calves averaged $96.70 per cwt.; and milk prices averaged $11.10 per cwt.

Nationally, prices for May and changes from April were as follows: winter wheat was unchanged at $3.19; spring wheat was $3.55, up $0.06; durum wheat was $3.99, up $0.01; the all barley price was $2.91, up $0.04, and steer and heifer prices were $79.50, up $0.70 per cwt.

The U.S. mid-June winter wheat price was $3.02 per bushel, spring wheat was $3.39 per bushel, durum wheat was $3.80 per bushel, all wheat was $3.09 per bushel, malt barley was $3.21 per bushel, feed barley was $2.36 per bushel, and all barley was $2.77. Steer and heifer prices were $79.20 per cwt, cow prices were $41.30, calves were $102.00 per cwt., all hog prices were $45.20 per cwt, and all egg prices were $0.678 per dozen.

The June All Farm Products Index is 106 percent of its 1990-92 base, unchanged from the May index, up 8 points (8.2 percent) from June 2002.

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J n Stocks

F ase: June 30, 2003
For more information contact: Thomas Chard or Peggy Stringer at 1-800-835-2612.

Stocks of all wheat in Montana on June 1, 2003 were 41.59 million bushels, down 27 percent from a year ago, according to the Montana Agricultural Statistics Service. All wheat stocks stored on the farm amounted to 29.0 million bushels, down 31 percent from a year ago. All wheat stored off-farm amounted 12.59 million bushels, down 18 percent from a year ago. All wheat disappearance for the March - May 2003 quarter was up 21 percent from the same quarter last year to 31.09 million bushels. This compares with 25.60 million bushels last year. Wheat stocks by class and by district are no longer available due to funding cuts by the Montana Wheat & Barley Committee.

Barley stocks in all positions on June 1, 2003 were 6.13 million bushels, up slightly from a year ago. Barley stored on-farm was 4.50 million bushels, up 50 percent from last year. Off-farm storage of barley was down 48 percent from a year ago to 1.63 million bushels. Oats stocks in all positions were 975,000 bushels, up 1 percent from last year. On-farm stocks of oats were 900,000 bushels, unchanged from a year ago. Oats stored off-farm were up 15 percent from last year to 75,000 bushels.

In the United States, all wheat stored in all positions on June 1, 2003 totaled 492 million bushels, down 37 percent from a year ago. On-farm stocks are estimated at 132 million bushels, down 39 percent from last year. Off-farm stocks, at 360 million bushels, are down 36 percent from a year ago. The March - May 2003 indicated disappearance is 415 million bushels, down 4 percent from the same period a year earlier. Durum wheat stocks in all positions on June 1, 2003 totaled 27.9 million bushels, down 15 percent from a year ago. On-farm stocks, at 15.1 million bushels, are down 27 percent from June 1, 2002. Off-farm stocks totaled 12.8 million bushels, up 3 percent from a year ago. The March - May 2003 indicated disappearance of 28.9 million bushels is up 53 percent from the same period a year earlier.

All barley stocks in the United States on June 1, 2003 totaled 69.3 million bushels, down 25 percent from June 1, 2002. On-farm stocks are estimated at 14.9 million bushels, 36 percent below a year ago. Off-farm stocks, at 54.5 million bushels, are 22 percent below June 2002. Indicated disappearance during the March - May 2003 quarter totaled 54.1 million bushels, 11 percent above the same period a year earlier.

Oats stored in all positions on June 1, 2003 totaled 49.8 million bushels, 21 percent below the stocks on June 1, 2002. Of the total stocks on hand, 20.6 million bushels are stored on farms, 28 percent less than a year ago. Off-farm stocks totaled 29.2 million bushels, 15 percent below a year earlier. Indicated disappearance during March - May 2003 totaled 33.1 million bushels, up 10 percent from the same period a year ago.

Corn stocks in all positions on June 1, 2003 totaled 2.98 billion bushels, down 17 percent from June 1, 2002. Of the total stocks, 1.62 billion bushels are stored on farms, down 20 percent from a year earlier. Off-farm stocks, at 1.36 billion bushels, are down 13 percent from the previous year. The March - May 2003 indicated disappearance is 2.15 billion bushels, compared with 2.20 billion bushels during the same period last year.

#end#

June 1, 2003 Grain Stocks

GRAIN and POSITION	MONTANA				UNITED STATES		
	June 1, 2002	Mar. 1, 2003	June 1, 2003	'03/'02	June 1, 2002	Mar. 1, 2003*	June 1, 2003
	Thousand Bushels			Percent	Thousand Bushels		
ALL WHEAT 2/							
On Farms	42,000	49,000	29,000	69%	216,830	233,200	132,110
Off Farms 1/	15,330	23,680	12,590	82%	560,282	671,677	359,611
TOTAL	57,330	72,680	41,590	73%	777,112	904,867	491,721
DURUM WHEAT 3/							
On Farms 4/	--	--	--	--	20,600	31,700	15,100
Off Farms 1/, 4/	--	--	--	--	12,390	24,849	12,808
TOTAL	--	--	--	--	32,990	56,549	27,908
BARLEY							
On Farms	3,000	8,500	4,500	150%	23,210	36,730	14,860
Off Farms 1/	3,110	6,520	1,630	52%	69,631	86,783	54,460
TOTAL	6,110	15,020	6,130	100%	92,841	123,513	69,320
OATS							
On Farms	900	1,600	900	100%	28,650	35,000	20,600
Off Farms 1/	65	115	75	115%	34,552	47,438	29,201
TOTAL	965	1,715	975	101%	63,202	82,438	49,801
CORN							
On Farms	--	--	--	--	2,020,600	2,940,000	1,620,200
Off Farms 1/	--	--	--	--	1,576,290	2,192,318	1,364,476
TOTAL	--	--	--	--	3,596,890	5,132,318	2,984,676

1/ Terminals, mills, interior elevators. 2/ Montana stocks for winter wheat and all spring wheat are no longer available due to funding cuts by the Montana Wheat & Barley Committee. 3/ Included in all wheat. 4/ Not included in order to avoid disclosing individual operations. * Revised.

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Small Grain Acreage:

All wheat seeded acreage in Montana is estimated to be 5.40 million acres, down 7 percent from last year, according to the Montana Agricultural Statistics Service. **Spring wheat** producers seeded an estimated 2.90 million acres, down 23 percent from last year and down 6 percent from what they intended to seed on March 1, 2003. This is the lowest spring wheat acreage planted since 1993 when 2.8 million acres were seeded. Producers intend to harvest 2.80 million acres of spring wheat this year, down 19 percent from last year's acreage. The low abandonment of winter wheat acreage this spring has partially contributed to less acres of spring wheat being seeded this year. The condition of the spring wheat crop for the week ending June 22nd was rated mostly good with 9% excellent, 54% good, 34% fair, 2% poor, and 1% very poor. Currently, one-quarter of the spring wheat crop is in the boot stage with only 4% of the crop headed which compares closely to last year but is behind the 5-year average. **Winter wheat** acreage seeded remained unchanged from the March 1 estimate at 1.85 million acres, up 28 percent from last year. This is the largest planted acreage since 1996 when 2.15 million acres were planted. Producers are expecting to harvest 1.75 million acres, up 50,000 acres from the previous forecast and up 1.0 million acres from last year's drought-reduced acreage. The condition of the winter wheat crop is significantly better than last year's crop as conditions were rated mostly good for the week ending June 22nd, compared with mostly poor to very poor a year ago. The winter wheat crop development is ahead of last year and slightly ahead of the 5-year average as 93% of the crop is in the boot stage and 73% has headed. **Durum wheat** acreage, at 650,000 acres, is up 10 percent from a year ago and is the largest durum wheat seeded acreage since 1956. Acreage of durum wheat intended to be harvested is estimated at 640,000 acres, up 13 percent from last year.

Montana **barley** growers seeded an estimated 1.2 million acres, which is unchanged from both last year's final estimate and their March 1, 2003 intentions. The state's barley growers intend to harvest 950,000 acres for grain this year, which is also unchanged from the previous year's final estimate. Planted acreage for **oats**, at 125,000 acres, is down 20,000 acres the previous year and is 10,000 acres less than intended plantings on March 1, 2003. Growers intend to harvest 65,000 acres of the oat crop for grain, 10,000 acres more than a year ago.

All wheat planted area for the **United States** is estimated at 60.9 million acres, up 1 percent from 2002. Harvested area is expected to total 52.7 million acres, up 15 percent from last year. The 2003 **winter wheat** planted area, at 44.3 million acres, is 6 percent above last year, but virtually unchanged from the previous estimate. Acreage planted to other **spring wheat** for 2003 is estimated at 13.8 million, down 12 percent from 2002. The **Durum** planted area for 2003 is estimated at 2.80 million acres, down 4 percent from last year.

U.S. barley growers seeded 5.46 million acres for 2003, up 8 percent from the 5.07 million acres seeded a year ago. Acres for harvest, at 4.90 million, are up 18 percent from the 2002 level. Acres seeded for the 2003 **oats** crop year totaled 4.68 million, down 7 percent from last year's planted area. Growers expect to harvest 2.29 million acres for grain, 9 percent more than the 2002 harvested acreage of 2.10 million.

Acreage for Row Crops, Hay, and Oilseeds:

Montana **corn** growers planted an estimated 60,000 acres which is down 5,000 acres from both a year ago and the March 1 intentions. Acreage intended to be harvested for grain, at 15,000 acres, is up 2,000 acres from a year ago. **Sugar beet** producers planted an estimated 52,300 acres, down 10 percent from 2002. They intend to harvest 52,000 of those acres, down 7 percent from the previous year. An estimated 2.65 million acres of **all hay** are expected to be harvested, 50,000 acres more than both last year's number and the March 1, 2003 intentions. Of the total hay expected for harvest, 1.65 million acres are expected to be **alfalfa** hay, which is up 250,000 acres from last year's figure. Producers expect to harvest 1.0 million acres of **other hay,** which is down 200,000 acres from a year ago. Farmers planted 16,000 acres of **dry beans** in 2003, down 41 percent from last year and 36 percent below their March 1, 2003 intentions. Producers are looking to harvest 15,000 acres of dry beans this season, 35 percent less than last year's number. Declining interest in growing Garbanzo beans as a result of disease problems and market pressures is leading the state's reduction in acreage. Also contributing to the decline is a slumping market for beans nationally. **Flaxseed** growers in Montana planted an estimated 13,000 acres of the oilseed this season, down 4,000 from last year's acreage. Producers intend to harvest 12,000 acres of flaxseed this year, down from 15,000 acres during the 2002 crop year.

U.S. **corn** planted area for all purposes is estimated at 79.1 million acres, virtually unchanged from 2002 but 4 percent above 2001. Growers expect to harvest 72.0 million acres for grain, up 4 percent from 2002. Farmers increased corn plantings 44,000 acres from their March intentions. **Sugar beets** area planted totaled 1.36 million acres in the 12 sugar beet-producing States, down 3 percent from the March intentions and down 5 percent from 2002. The area for harvest is estimated at 1.34 million, down 2 percent from 2002.

U.S. producers expect to harvest 64.4 million acres of **all hay** in 2003, slightly below 2002. **Alfalfa and alfalfa mixtures** are estimated at 23.5 million acres, up 2 percent from last year. **All other hay** is estimated at 40.8 million acres, down 1 percent from last year, when Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) land was released for hay harvest. U.S. **dry bean** growers planted 1.51 million acres for 2003, down 21 percent from last year but 5 percent above two years ago. The June planted acres estimate is 1 percent below growers plans in March. Acres to be harvested are estimated at 1.44 million, down 17 percent from last year but 15 percent above 2001. Acreage planted to **flaxseed** in 2003 is 583,000 acres, down 26 percent from last year's planted acreage of 785,000 acres. Area for harvest, at 572,000 acres, is 19 percent below the harvested area in 2002.

Crop Contacts: Thomas Chard for wheat and sugar beets; John Gibbons for barley, hay and pulse crops; Eric Siebens for corn, oats, and oilseeds.

#end#

June 1, 2003 Crop Acreage, Montana and U.S.

Crop	Unit	Acres Planted		Acres Harvested		Yield		Production	
		2002	2003 1/	2002	2003 1/	2002	2003 1/	2002	2003 1/
		(000) Acres		(000) Acres				(000) Units	
Winter Wheat	Bu.	1,450	1,850	750	1,750	28.0	3/	21,000	3/
Durum Wheat	Bu.	590	650	565	640	23.0	3/	12,995	3/
Spring Wheat	Bu.	3,750	2,900	3,450	2,800	22.0	3/	75,900	3/
All Wheat	Bu.	5,790	5,400	4,765	5,190	23.1	3/	109,895	3/
Corn for Grain 2/	Bu.	65.0	60.0	13.0	15.0	140.0	4/	1,820	4/
Oats	Bu.	145	125	55.0	65.0	49.0	3/	2,695	3/
Barley	Bu.	1,200	1,200	950	950	42.0	3/	39,900	3/
Flaxseed	Bu.	17.0	13.0	15.0	12.0	13.0	5/	195	5/
Dry Beans	Cwt.	26.9	16.0	23.0	15.0	15.7	4/	361	4/
Dry Peas	Cwt.	32.0	4/	27.0	4/	7.6	4/	205	4/
Lentils	Cwt.	25.0	4/	21.0	4/	7.1	4/	149	4/
Aus. Winter Peas	Cwt.	9.5	4/	3.5	4/	5.8	4/	20	4/
Sugar Beets	Ton	58.0	52.3	55.9	52.0	19.6	4/	1,096	4/
Fall Potatoes	Cwt.	10.5	4/	10.4	4/	310.0	4/	3,224	4/
Alfalfa Hay	Ton	--	--	1,400	1,650	2.10	4/	2,940	4/
All Other Hay	Ton	--	--	1,200	1,000	1.40	4/	1,680	4/
All Hay	Ton	--	--	2,600	2,650	1.78	4/	4,620	4/
UNITED STATES		(000) Acres		(000) Acres				(000) Units	
Winter Wheat	Bu.	41,735	44,349	29,651	36,491	38.5	3/	1,142,802	3/
Durum Wheat	Bu.	2,909	2,804	2,703	2,738	29.4	3/	79,450	3/
Spring Wheat	Bu.	15,714	13,787	13,463	13,448	29.3	3/	394,189	3/
All Wheat	Bu.	60,358	60,940	45,817	52,677	35.3	3/	1,616,441	3/
Corn for Grain 2/	Bu.	79,054	79,066	69,313	71,985	130.0	4/	9,007,659	4/
Oats	Bu.	5,005	4,676	2,098	2,286	56.8	3/	119,132	3/
Barley	Bu.	5,073	5,461	4,135	4,899	54.9	3/	226,873	3/
Flaxseed	Bu.	785	583	704	572	17.9	5/	12,569	5/
Dry Beans	Cwt.	1,922.1	1,511.7	1,726.9	1,439.7	17.4	4/	29,974	4/
Dry Peas	Cwt.	302.7	3/	279.7	3/	15.2	4/	4,242	4/
Lentils	Cwt.	221.0	3/	209.0	3/	12.0	4/	2,508	4/
Aus. Winter Peas	Cwt.	21.5	3/	11.6	3/	14.1	4/	164	4/
Sugar Beets	Ton	1,427.3	1,362.4	1,361.1	1,336.8	20.4	4/	27,718	4/
Fall Potatoes	Cwt.	1,144.2	3/	1,114.8	3/	374.0	4/	417,228	4/
Alfalfa Hay	Ton	--	--	23,135	23,541	3.19	4/	73,824	4/
All Other Hay	Ton	--	--	41,362	40,838	1.86	4/	77,138	4/
All Hay	Ton	--	--	64,497	64,379	2.34	4/	150,962	4/

1/ Preliminary. 2/ Planted for all purposes. 3/ Forecast available July 11, 2003. 4/ Forecast available August 12, 2003. 5/ Forecast available January 9, 2004

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Based on July 1 conditions, Montana's **all wheat production** is expected to be 164.5 million bushels up 50% from last year's drought reduced crop, according to the Montana Agricultural Statistics Service. The area for harvest is expected to be 5.19 million acres, unchanged from the June Acreage report but up 9% from last year.

The forecasted **winter wheat** yield, at 37.0 bushels per acre, is up 9 bushels from last year. Production is forecast to be 64.75 million bushels, three times higher than last year because producers expect to harvest 1.0 million more acres and a expect a higher yield. For the week ending July 6th, winter wheat conditions were rated 5% very poor, 11% poor, 33% fair, 40% good and 11% excellent. Crop development is ahead of normal as 65% of the crop was rated as turning color for the week ending July 6th, compared with 15% last year and 38% for the 5-year average. Recent above normal temperatures and little rainfall has contributed to accelerated development and heightened concerns over potential crop yields.

The first **spring wheat** production forecast is 81.2 million bushels, up 7% from last year's production due to higher expected yields. The harvested acres are expected to be 2.8 million, down 19% from 2002. The expected yield of 29.0 bushels per acre is up 7 bushels per acre from last year. Spring wheat conditions are rated about the same as a year ago for the week ending July 6th at 3% very poor, 7% poor, 30% fair, 55% good, and 5% excellent. **Durum wheat** production is forecast to be 18.56 million bushels, up 43% from last year due to higher expected yield and a 13% increase in harvested acreage. Harvested acreage is expected to be 640,000 acres. The expected yield of 29.0 bushels per acre is up 6 bushels from last year.

Barley yields are expected to average 51.0 bushels per acre in 2003, 9 bushels better than last year. Barley production is forecast to be 48.45 million bushels compared with 39.9 million produced last year. Growers expect to harvest 950,000 acres, unchanged from 2002. For the week ending July 6th, barley conditions were rated 3% very poor, 9% poor, 25% fair, 47% good and 16% excellent. Crop development is ahead of last year, with 79% reaching boot stage by July 6th, and 49% of the crop headed. The 5-year average for boot stage and heading is 80% and 52%, respectively. **Oats** producers expect to harvest 3.51 million bushels of grain, 30% more than was produced last year. The 2003 area for harvest is expected to be 65,000 acres compared with 55,000 harvested for grain in 2002. The expected yield of 54.0 bushels is 6 bushels better than last year's yield.

Montana **potato** producers planted 10,600 acres during 2003, up 100 acres from last year. The first forecast of potato production will be on November 12, 2003. Pulse crop growers increased their acreage this year. **Dry edible pea** growers planted an estimated 50,000 acres during 2003, and expect to harvest 39,000 acres. Last year, growers planted 32,000 acres of dry edible peas and harvested 27,000 acres. **Lentil** growers planted 32,000 acres this year, up 28% from last year. Producers are expecting to harvest 29,000 of those acres. Last year 25,000 acres of lentils were planted, while 21,000 acres were harvested. **Austrian winter pea** acreage is up slightly from last year. Ten thousand acres were planted during 2003, while 9,500 were planted last year. Only 3,000 acres of this year's crop are expected to be harvested as peas, with the remaining acreage being hayed or grazed.

U.S. winter wheat acres harvested for grain are forecast at 36.5 million, up 23 percent from 2002. Harvest progress, in the 18 major producing States, was 47 percent complete by June 29. This was 10 percentage points behind last year and 3 points behind the 5-year average. Yield increases from last month are forecast in most of the major Hard Red Winter (HRW) States. The U.S. yield is forecast at 47.0 bushels per acre, up 2.4 bushels from last month. **Other spring wheat** acres harvested in the United States is forecast at 13.4 million acres, down slightly from last year. The U.S. yield is forecast at 37.3 bushels per acre, 8.0 bushels higher than last year. Of the total production, 467 million is Hard Red Spring wheat, up 31 percent from last season. **Durum wheat** area for 2003 grain harvest is expected to total 2.74 million acres, up 1 percent from last year. The U.S. yield is forecast at 34.1 bushels per acre, 4.7 bushels more than last year.

U.S. barley production for 2003 is forecast at 292 million bushels, 28 percent above 2002. Based on conditions as of July 1, the average yield is forecast at 59.5 bushels per acre, up 4.6 bushels from last year. Area harvested, at 4.90 million acres, is up 18 percent from 2002. **Oats** production in the United States for 2003 is forecast at 148 million bushels, 24 percent above last year's 119 million bushels. Area for harvest is estimated at 2.29 million acres, 9 percent above last year. The forecasted yield is 64.7 bushels per acre, 7.9 bushels above 2002. If realized, this would be the highest yield since 1992. Ninety-seven percent of the oat crop was emerged on June 8, ahead of the 5-year average.

Planted acreage of **lentils** in Idaho, Montana, North Dakota, and Washington is estimated at 246,000 acres, up 11 percent from last year and 22 percent above 2001. Harvested acreage is estimated at 240,000, up 15 percent from last year. Planted acreage of **dry edible peas** in the **U.S.** for 2003 is estimated at 356,000 acres, up 18 percent from last year and 72 percent above 2001. Planted acreage of **Austrian winter peas** in Idaho, Montana, and Oregon is estimated at 21,200 acres, 1 percent below 2002 but 33 percent above the 2001 season. Harvested acreage is estimated at 10,600 acres, down 9 percent from last year but 49 percent above 2 years ago.

U.S. area planted to **fall potatoes** this year is estimated at 1.11 million acres, down 3 percent from last year but 2 percent above two years ago. Harvest is forecast from 1.09 million acres, down 2 percent from a year ago but 2 percent above 2001. Western States fall potato planted area is estimated at 666,500 acres this year, down 5 percent from last year but 3 percent above 2001.

Crop Contacts: Thomas Chard for wheat; John Gibbons for barley and pulse crops; Eric Siebens for oats and potatoes.

#end#

July 1, 2003 Crop Production Forecast, Montana and U.S.

Crop	Unit	Acres Planted		Acres Harvested		Yield		Production	
		2002	2003 1/	2002	2003 1/	2002	2003 1/	2002	2003 1/
		(000) Acres		(000) Acres				(000) Units	
Winter Wheat	Bu.	1,450	1,850	750	1,750	28.0	37.0	21,000	64,750
Durum Wheat	Bu.	590	650	565	640	23.0	29.0	12,995	18,560
Spring Wheat	Bu.	3,750	2,900	3,450	2,800	22.0	29.0	75,900	81,200
All Wheat	Bu.	5,790	5,400	4,765	5,190	23.1	31.7	109,895	164,510
Corn for Grain 2/	Bu.	65.0	60.0	13.0	15.0	140.0	5/	1,820	5/
Oats	Bu.	145	125	55.0	65.0	49.0	54.0	2,695	3,510
Barley	Bu.	1,200	1,200	950	950	42.0	51.0	39,900	48,450
Flaxseed	Bu.	17.0	13.0	15.0	12.0	13.0	5/	195	5/
Dry Beans	Cwt.	26.9	16.0	23.0	15.0	15.7	3/	361	3/
Dry Peas	Cwt.	32.0	50.0	27.0	39.0	7.6	5/	205	5/
Lentils	Cwt.	25.0	32.0	21.0	29.0	7.1	4/	149	4/
Aus. Winter Peas	Cwt.	9.5	10.0	3.5	3.0	5.8	5/	20	5/
Sugar Beets	Ton	58.0	52.3	55.9	52.0	19.6	3/	1,096	3/
Fall Potatoes	Cwt.	10.5	10.6	10.4	10.5	310.0	4/	3,224	4/
Alfalfa Hay	Ton	--	--	1,400	1,650	2.10	3/	2,940	3/
All Other Hay	Ton	--	--	1,200	1,000	1.40	3/	1,680	3/
All Hay	Ton	--	--	2,600	2,650	1.78	3/	4,620	3/
UNITED STATES		(000) Acres		(000) Acres				(000) Units	
Winter Wheat	Bu.	41,735	44,349	29,651	36,491	38.5	47.0	1,142,802	1,715,912
Durum Wheat	Bu.	2,909	2,804	2,703	2,738	29.4	34.1	79,450	93,495
Spring Wheat	Bu.	15,714	13,787	13,463	13,448	29.3	37.3	394,189	501,504
All Wheat	Bu.	60,358	60,940	45,817	52,677	35.3	43.9	1,616,441	2,310,911
Corn for Grain 2/	Bu.	79,054	79,066	69,313	71,985	130.0	3/	9,007,659	3/
Oats	Bu.	5,005	4,676	2,098	2,286	56.8	64.7	119,132	147,895
Barley	Bu.	5,073	5,461	4,135	4,899	54.9	59.5	226,873	291,527
Flaxseed	Bu.	785	583	704	572	17.9	5/	12,569	5/
Dry Beans	Cwt.	1,922.1	1,511.7	1,726.9	1,439.7	17.4	3/	29,974	3/
Dry Peas	Cwt.	302.7	356.0	279.7	334.0	15.2	5/	4,242	5/
Lentils	Cwt.	221.0	246.0	209.0	240.0	12.0	4/	2,508	4/
Aus. Winter Peas	Cwt.	21.5	21.2	11.6	10.6	14.1	5/	164	5/
Sugar Beets	Ton	1,427.3	1,362.4	1,361.1	1,336.8	20.4	3/	27,718	3/
Fall Potatoes	Cwt.	1,144.2	1,114.4	1,114.8	1,093.4	374.0	4/	417,228	4/
Alfalfa Hay	Ton	--	--	23,135	23,541	3.19	3/	73,824	3/
All Other Hay	Ton	--	--	41,362	40,838	1.86	3/	77,138	3/
All Hay	Ton	--	--	64,497	64,379	2.34	3/	150,962	3/

1/ Preliminary. 2/ Planted for all purposes. 3/ Forecast available August 12, 2003. 4/ Forecast available November 12, 2003. 5/ Forecast available January 9, 2004. -- Not published.

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Montana farmers seeded 1.2 million acres of barley in 2003, unchanged from last year. Some 58 percent of the acres seeded to barley were malting and brewing varieties recommended by the American Malting Barley Association Inc. for use in Montana. The top variety seeded in Montana was Harrington, maintaining its position for the tenth consecutive year.

Malting Varieties

Harrington remained the top variety planted in the state for the tenth year in a row. It was seeded on 551.9 thousand acres or 46.0 percent of Montana's barley acreage. Harrington is the most popular variety of barley recommended by the AMBA for planting in Montana. It is a two-rowed malting barley variety developed by the University of Saskatchewan. It is two to three days earlier than Klages and has better lodging resistance. It is susceptible to leaf diseases (net blotch, scald), stem rust, and loose smut. It has a long, rough awn and a white aleurone.

B 1202 maintained the second place malting variety position for the eighth consecutive year with 57.1 thousand acres or 4.8 percent of the barley seeded. It is an AMBA approved, two-rowed spring barley. The spike is lax in density and nodding. The awn on the lemma is long and rough. Rachilla, rachis, and glume hairs are all long. The awns are equal to the length of the hair-covered glume. The hull is adhered and slightly to semi-wrinkled and the aleurone is colorless. B 1202 is moderately susceptible to net blotch, scald and stripe rust.

Moravian 37 is ranked third among malting barley varieties for the third year in a row with 44.9 thousand acres, or 3.7 percent of the state's acreage. This variety is a two-rowed spring malt barley released by Coors Brewing Company. Moravian 37 has slightly higher yield and test weight than Galena. Height and straw strength are similar to Galena. Heading date is earlier than Galena.

Merit rounds out the top four malting varieties again in 2003, with 43.8 thousand acres, or 3.7 percent of seeded acreage. Merit is a two-rowed, mid-maturing, mid-dense head barley adapted to the InterMountain West barley producing region. Glume hair is long and confined to a band. Seed is covered, finely wrinkled with wax present and the aleurone is colorless. It is resistant to net blotch and moderately resistant to scald. B Merit is a spring barley bred and developed by Busch Agricultural Resources, Inc, and was recommended by the AMBA in 2003 for use in Montana.

Forage Varieties

Haybet remained the most popular forage barley for the fourth year in a row, with 123.1 thousand acres seeded, which accounted for 10.3 percent of the total barley acres seeded in Montana for 2003. Haybet, as the name implies, is used primarily for hay in Montana. It was developed cooperatively by the Agricultural Research Service, United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), and the Montana Agricultural Experiment Station in 1989. It is a two-rowed, hooded, white-kerneled spring hay barley. Compared to Horsford hay barley, Haybet is 3 days later in heading and similar in plant height and percent lodging. Haybet is higher in hay yield than Horsford, but they are similar in grain yield.

Westford was the second most popular forage barley, with 28.5 thousand acres or 2.4 percent of the state-wide barley acres seeded in 2003. It is a 6-row hooded hay barley developed by Western Plant Breeders of Bozeman, Montana. Maturity is considerably later than Horsford and Whitford, allowing for greater forage production. Seed yield is low (similar to Horsford). Hay yields considerably higher than Horsford. Hooded barleys are sometimes vulnerable to ergot, but the amount is slight.

Feed Varieties

Baronesse was the most popular feed barley again in 2003. It represents 4.2 percent of the total acreage or 50.4 thousand acres for feed barley seeded in Montana for 2003. This is up from the 46.3 thousand acres seeded last year. Developed in Germany, it is a two-rowed, rough awned spring barley. Baronesse is medium-short in height and medium in maturity. It has excellent irrigated yield potential and is highly resistant to lodging and moderately resistant to net blotch.

Gallatin replaced its cousin Hector this year as the second most popular feed barley grown. Statewide, 35.7 thousand acres were seeded, which is 3.0 percent of all barley acreage. Gallatin was developed from the cross of Summit and Hector cooperatively by ARS, USDA, and the Montana and Idaho Agricultural Experiment stations. It is a two-rowed, rough-awned, spring barley.

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July 1 Cattle Inventory

For immediate release: July 18, 2003
For more information contact: Thomas Chard or Peggy Stringer at 1-800-835-2612.

The all cattle and calf inventory in Montana was 3.40 million head on July 1, 2003, up 1 percent from a year ago, but down 3 percent from July 2001, according to the Montana Agricultural Statistics Service. Spring rainfall helped pasture and hay growth in many areas of the state and temporarily relieved drought concerns, however recent heat and dry conditions is quickly deteriorating pasture and range conditions. Pasture and range conditions are rated 7% very poor, 15% poor, 35% fair, 37% good, and 6% excellent which is better than a year ago at this time.

The beef cow inventory in the state rose 1 percent from a year ago to 1.482 million head. Milk cow inventory remained unchanged from last year at 18,000 head. The 2003 calf crop is expected to be 1.5 million head, up slightly from a year ago.

All cattle and calves in the United States as of July 1, 2003, totaled 103.9 million head, 1 percent below the 105.1 million on July 1, 2002 and 2 percent below the 105.8 million two years ago. All cows and heifers that have calved, at 42.7 million, were slightly below the 42.9 million on July 1, 2002 and 1 percent below the 43.0 million two years ago. Beef cows, at 33.6 million, were down slightly from July 1, 2002 and 1 percent below two years ago. Milk cows, at 9.1 million, were down 1 percent from July 1, 2002 but were unchanged from two years ago.

Other class estimates on July 1, 2003 and the changes from July 1, 2002, are as follows:
-- All heifers 500 pounds and over, 15.9 million, down 2 percent.
-- Beef replacement heifers, 4.6 million, unchanged.
-- Milk replacement heifers, 3.6 million, down 3 percent.
-- Other heifers, 7.7 million, down 3 percent.
-- Steers weighing 500 pounds and over, 14.2 million, down 2 percent.
-- Bulls weighing 500 pounds and over, 2.1 million, unchanged.
-- Calves under 500 pounds, 29.0 million, down 1 percent.
-- All cattle and calves on feed for slaughter, 11.7 million, down 6 percent.

The 2003 calf crop is expected to be 38.0 million, down 1 percent from 2002 and down 1 percent from 2001. Calves born during the first half of the year are estimated at 27.7 million, down 1 percent from 2002 and down 1 percent from 2001.

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For immediate release: July 18, 2003
For more information contact: John Gibbons or Peggy Stringer at 1-800-835-2612.

Winter Wheat

Rampart acreage soared, moving it into the first position for 2003, with 461,600 acres seeded. Rampart, a hard red winter wheat, was developed by the Montana Agricultural Experiment Station and released in 1996. It is an awned, red-chaffed, solid-stemmed variety. Kernels are hard red, with a mid-sized germ. Rampart is resistant to the wheat stem sawfly and to prevalent races of stem rust. It is susceptible to stripe rust, leaf rust, dwarf smut, and the Russian wheat aphid. Rampart has excellent milling and baking qualities.

Neeley became the second leading variety of winter wheat seeded in Montana after fifteen consecutive years on top. There were 312,800 acres seeded for the 2003 crop. However, total acres actually increased 8 percent from last year's 289,200, as winter wheat seeding are up 400,000 acres statewide from the previous year. Neeley was developed by the Agricultural Research Service, United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) in cooperation with the Idaho Agricultural Experiment Station and released in 1980. It is a semi-dwarf variety, with intermediate maturity.

Tiber remained in third place with 181,100 acres seeded. Last year 162,000 acres were seeded. Tiber is a standard-height, hard red winter wheat variety released by the Montana Agricultural Experiment Station in 1987. Tiber is a bearded, brown-chaffed, stiff-strawed variety. It has a high yield potential, good shatter resistance, and good winter hardiness (similar to Redwin). Tiber's resistance to lodging and shattering is equal to Redwin, but shorter in straw height than Winalta. It also has moderate resistance to the leaf spot complex, but is susceptible to dwarf smut, stem rust, and very susceptible to stripe rust.

Rocky remained the number four variety in Montana, with 143,300 acres seeded for the 2003 crop. Rocky accounted for 7.7 percent of the state's seeded acreage, down 3.4 points from last year. Released in 1978 by Nickerson American Plant Breeders, Rocky is a pure line selection from Centurk. Recommended for the same areas as Centurk, but higher yielding under most conditions. Rocky is resistant to soil born mosaic.

The top four varieties, Rampart, Neeley, Tiber, and Rocky, accounted for 59.4 percent of the winter wheat acreage seeded for harvest in 2003. The top four varieties seeded for 2002 accounted for 61.9 percent of the total acreage for the state.

Spring Wheat

McNeal was the leading spring wheat variety seeded for the sixth consecutive year, accounting for over 36 percent of the acreage, or almost 1.05 million acres planted. That is a decrease of 28 percent in McNeal acres from 2002, while other spring wheat acreage is down 23 percent this year. McNeal was developed by the Montana Agricultural Experiment Station and released in March 1995. It is a semi-dwarf, hard red spring wheat with red chaff and tan straw. Under Montana growing conditions, McNeal is moderately resistant to lodging and to prevalent races of stem rust and wheat streak mosaic virus. It is somewhat susceptible to leaf rust and stripe rust, and is also fairly vulnerable to Russian wheat aphid and the wheat stem sawfly.

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July 1, and Lamb Inventory Down 4 Percent

For imn 8, 2003
For more information contact: John Gibbons or Peggy Stringer at 1-800-835-2512

All sheep and lamb inventory in the United States on July 1, 2003, totaled 7.80 million head, 4 percent below July 1, 2002. Breeding sheep inventory at 4.61 million head on July 1, 2003 was 4 percent below July 1, 2002. Market sheep and lambs (including newborn lambs) at 3.19 million head, were 4 percent below last July.

The breeding herd consists of 3.84 million ewes one year old and older, 175,000 rams one year old and older, and 600,000 replacement lambs (including newborn lambs).

Region 3 (CO, MT, SD, UT, & WY) accounted for 33.3 percent of the total sheep and lambs. Region 2 (NM & TX) accounted for 22.3 percent, Region 1 (AZ, CA, ID, NV, OR, & WA) for 17.1 percent, Region 4 (IA, KS, MN, MO, NE, ND, & OK) for 15.6 percent, and Region 5 (all other states) accounted for 11.7 percent.

The 2003 lamb crop in the United States is expected to total 4.13 million head, down 5 percent from the 2002 lamb crop of 4.36 million head. Lambs born during January through June 2003 totaled 3.68 million head or 89 percent of the yearly total. An additional 450,000 head are expected to be born during the period July through December 2003.

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Montana Farms and Ranches With Internet Access Second Highest Nationally

For immediate release: July 29, 2003
For more information contact: Peggy Stringer or Curt Lund at 1-800-835-2612.

Montana farms and ranches that have Internet access reached 63 percent in 2003, the second highest percentage in the Nation only trailing Oregon with 72 percent, according to the Montana Agricultural Statistics Service. The 63 percent with Internet access in 2003 compares with 57 percent in 2001, 38 percent in 1999 and 15 percent in 1997. A total of 72 percent of farms and ranches had access to a computer in 2003, third highest nationally, compared with 71 percent two years ago and 65 percent in 1999. Seventy percent of all Montana farms and ranches own or lease a computer, up from 67 percent in 2001. Farms and ranches using computers for their agricultural business increased one point from 2001 to 44 percent in 2003.

Farm computer usage numbers are also published by regions. Montana is included with Arizona, California, Colorado, Idaho, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Utah, Washington and Wyoming. In 2003, 70 percent of the farms and ranches in this region have access to a computer, 66 percent own or lease a computer; 41 percent are using a computer for their agricultural business; and 60 percent have Internet access. Computer access for crop farms in the region increased 2 points to 69 percent. The percentage of crop farms having Internet access increased 5 points to 59 percent. The percentage of livestock producers in the region that had access to computers increased to 70 percent, compared with 69 percent two years ago. Sixty percent of the livestock producers in the region have Internet access, compared with 56 percent in 2001.

A total of 48 percent of U.S. farms now have Internet access, compared to 43 percent with Internet access in 2001. Fifty-eight percent of farms have access to a computer in 2003, compared to the 2001 level of 55 percent. Fifty-four percent of all U.S. farms own or lease a computer, up from 50 percent in 2001. Farms using computers for their farm business increased from 29 percent in 2001 to 30 percent in 2003. It appears that computer usage, ownership and Internet access on farms have begun to level off.

In 2003, 82 percent of U.S. farms with sales and government payments of $250,000 or more have access to a computer, 79 percent own or lease a computer, 68 percent are using a computer for their farm business, and 72 percent have Internet access. For farms with sales and government payments between $100,000 and $249,999, the figures are: 70 percent have access to a computer, 66 percent own or lease a computer, 49 percent are using a computer for their farm business, and 54 percent have Internet access. For farms with sales and government payments between $10,000 and $99,999, there were 57 percent that reported having computer access, 52 percent own or lease a computer, 32 percent use a computer for their farm business, and 47 percent have Internet access.

Of the U.S. farms with Internet access, 11 percent used the Internet to access Federal Government web sites other than USDA, while 3 percent conducted business with any USDA web site and 5 percent conducted business with any other Federal Government web site. At the U.S. level, 4 percent of the farms used a toll-free customer service number during the July 2002 through June 2003 period.

For dairy farms with sales and government payments of $250,000 or more, 90 percent have computer access. Of the cotton farms with sales and government payments of $250,000 or more, 83 percent have computer access.

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ices Received for June 2003

For immediate release: July 31, 2003
For more information contact: Eric Siebens or Peggy Stringer at 1-800-835-2612.

June 2003 full month crop prices were mostly lower compared with May 2003, according to the Montana Agricultural Statistics Service. Montana's winter wheat average price was $3.25 per bushel, down $0.13 from the previous month; spring wheat price was down $0.02 to $3.63 per bushel; but durum wheat prices rose $0.04 to $4.41 per bushel. Feed barley prices dropped $0.12 from the previous month to $2.12 and malt barley prices dropped $0.15 to $3.04 per bushel.

The mid-July price for alfalfa hay dropped $3.00 to $76.00 per ton, but all other hay increased $1.00 to $73.00 per ton. Mid-July grain prices were lower with winter wheat averaging $2.94 per bushel, spring wheat was $3.37 per bushel, durum wheat was $3.99 per bushel, feed barley was $2.10 per bushel and malt barley averaged $2.75 per bushel.

Livestock prices for the full month of June were mostly lower compared to the previous month. Steer and heifer prices dropped $4.10 to $79.90 per cwt while cows increased $0.10 to $45.70. The average price for calves dropped $2.00 to $97.00 per cwt. Sheep prices dropped $4.80 to $29.10 per cwt but lamb prices rose $3.00 to $103.00 per cwt. Milk prices decreased $0.10 per cwt from May to $11.00 per cwt. Steer and heifer prices for mid-July averaged $83.40 per cwt.; cows averaged $47.50 per cwt.; calves averaged $100.00 per cwt.; and milk prices averaged $10.90 per cwt.

Nationally, prices for June and changes from May were as follows: winter wheat was down $0.26 to $2.93; spring wheat was $3.46, down $0.09; durum wheat was unchanged at $3.99; the all barley price was $3.01, up $0.10, and steer and heifer prices were $78.70, down $0.80 per cwt.

The U.S. mid-July winter wheat price was $2.85 per bushel, spring wheat was $3.25 per bushel, durum wheat was $3.76 per bushel, all wheat was $2.93 per bushel, malt barley was $3.00 per bushel, feed barley was $2.15 per bushel, and all barley was $2.60. Steer and heifer prices were $77.60 per cwt, cow prices were $44.30, calves were $103.00 per cwt., all hog prices were $42.00 per cwt, and all egg prices were $0.697 per dozen.

The preliminary All Farm Products Index of Prices Received by Farmers in July is 104, based on 1990-92=100, down 3 points (2.8 percent) from the June Index.

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Mc sh Rents for 2003

For immediate release: August 7, 2003
For more information please contact: Eric Siebens or Peggy Stringer at 1-800-935-2612

The average cash rent for Montana cropland remained unchanged from last year at $24.00 per acre, according to the Montana Agricultural Statistics Service. The average cash rent for irrigated cropland, at $48.00, increased by $1.00 per acre from a year ago. The non-irrigated cropland average was unchanged from 2002 at $18.50 per acre. Average pasture rents decreased from $4.70 in 2002 to $4.50 per acre in 2003.

Cash rents paid to U.S. landlords for agricultural real estate were mixed during the 2003 crop year. Cropland cash rents paid in 2003 increased 2 percent from a year earlier, advancing to $73.00 per acre, compared with the revised figure of $71.60 per acre for 2002. However, pasture cash rents dropped 2 percent, from $9.20 per acre in 2002 to $9.00 per acre in 2003.

The increase in cropland rental rates was modest, reflecting producers' attitudes toward the combination of slightly reduced production levels of major U.S. crops in 2002 and higher, though still historically low, commodity prices. The Corn Belt and Northern Plains regions, which together account for nearly one half of cash rented cropland acreage, both increased 2 percent from 2002. Cropland cash rents increased $2.00 per acre, to $110.00, in the Corn Belt and $1.00 per acre, to $48.00, in the Northern Plains. Cropland rental rates increased in 8 of the 10 regions, while rental rates in the Southeast region fell 2 percent to $44.00 per acre. Rental rates in the Pacific region remained unchanged at $180.00 per acre.

The major corn and soybean producing States of Illinois, Indiana, and Iowa experienced increases ranging from 1 to 2 percent for cropland cash rents. Of the 3 States, Illinois had the highest cash rent, at $123.00 per acre, but experienced the smallest rental increase from 2002 of $1.00 per acre. Iowa cropland rents increased $2.00 per acre, to $122.00. Three of the four states in the Northern Plains region showed increases in cropland cash rents, led by South Dakota's $3.00 per acre increase in non-irrigated cropland. Kansas cropland rents remained unchanged at $39.00 per acre.

Pasture cash rents reflected the drought-reduced forage production of pastures and range lands in major livestock-grazing States. Shifts in cash rented acreage from higher valued regions to lower valued regions also contributed to lower U.S. pasture cash rents, despite per acre increases in 5 of the 10 regions and no change in 2 of the remaining 5 regions. Pasture cash rents fell in the Delta, Mountain, and Pacific regions, and were unchanged in the Corn Belt and Appalachian regions.

Wisconsin continued to lead the Nation with the highest pasture rent, at $36.00 per acre, despite relatively weak milk prices. Sharp decreases in many areas of the Mountain region offset increases in parts of the Northern and Southern Plains.

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Farm Real Estate Values Up

For immediate release: August 7, 2003
For more information please contact: Eric Siebens or Peggy Stringer at 1-800-835-2612.

The average value of farm real estate in Montana on January 1, 2003 was $400 per acre, up $15.00 from 2002, according to the Montana Agricultural Statistics Service. The average value of cropland rose $11.00 to $521 per acre, compared with a year ago. The average value of irrigated cropland was $1,550, $20 more than a year ago, while non-irrigated cropland gained $10.00 per acre to $375 per acre on January 1, 2003. Pasture values increased $10.00 to $270 per acre. Montana farm real estate values have been steadily increasing over the past five years.

U.S. farm real estate values, a measurement of the value of all land and buildings on farms, averaged $1,270 per acre as of January 1, 2003, up 5.0 percent from the previous year. The value of farm real estate increased in all States except Kansas, where values remained at 2002 levels. The $60 per acre increase in farm real estate values continued an upward trend that began in 1987.

The increase in all land and buildings followed the trend of cropland and pasture values, which rose by 4.2 and 5.1 percent, respectively, from January 1, 2002. Cropland values averaged $1,720 per acre and pasture values averaged $618 per acre on January 1, 2003, compared with $1,650 and $588 per acre, respectively, a year earlier.

The increases in farm real estate and the cropland and pasture components were largely, though not entirely, driven by low interest rates and poor returns for alternative assets. The certainty of government commodity programs also lent support to some agricultural land. Also, potential for nonagricultural uses contributed to strong increases, especially for pasture values. Income from crop and livestock commodities was mixed, providing limited support for farm real estate values in some areas, while creating a slight drag on values in other areas.

Regional increases in the average value of farm real estate ranged from 3.4 percent in the Pacific region to 7.6 percent in the Lake region. The highest farm real estate values were in the Northeast region, where urban influences drove the average value to $2,950 per acre. In the Appalachian and Southeast regions, where urban and recreational influences are increasing, farm real estate values rose 7.1 percent to $2,420 per acre. The Mountain region, with its expanse of pasture and rangeland, has the lowest farm real estate value, at $526 per acre.

Cropland values rose 4.7 percent, to $2,450 per acre, in the Corn Belt and 2.6 percent, to $738 per acre, in the Northern Plains. Together these regions account for about one-half of the U.S. total cropland acres. The highest average cropland values, at $3,720 per acre, are in the Pacific region, where a significant portion of the cropland is irrigated.

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August Crop Production

For immediate release: August 12, 2003
For more information call 1-800-835-2612: Peggy Stringer, State Statistician

Montana's **all wheat production** is expected to be 11 percent lower than last month's forecast, but still 35 percent higher than last year's drought-reduced crop. Based on August 1 conditions, producers expect to harvest 147.95 million bushels of all wheat, up from the 109.9 million bushels harvested last year. The area for harvest is expected to be 5.19 million acres, unchanged from last month, but up 9 percent from last year. This is the last forecast until the final small grains summary is published on September 30, 2003.

The forecasted **winter wheat** yield, at 37.0 bushels per acre, is unchanged from July, but 9 bushels per acre higher than last year. Production is forecast to be 64.75 million bushels, up from 21.0 million bushels last year. Acreage expected to be harvested is unchanged from the July forecast, but is up one million acres from last year to 1,750,000 acres. For week ending August 10, winter wheat was rated 97 percent ripe compared with 84 percent last year and the 5-average of 92 percent. Harvest is well underway with 79 percent complete compared with 47 percent last year and 68 percent for the five-year average.

Spring wheat production forecast is 67.2 million bushels, down 11 percent from last year's production. The expected yield of 24.0 bushels per acre is down 5 bushels from last month, but up 2 bushels from last year. Acres for harvest are unchanged from last month at 2.8 million, but down 19 percent from last year. The yield potential and condition of the spring wheat crop deteriorated during the month due to the record high temperatures and lack of rainfall. The crop was rated lower than this time last year at 14 percent very poor, 31 percent poor, 35 percent fair, 18 percent good, and 2 percent excellent. Weather conditions during the past month have rapidly sped up crop progress and development is ahead of last year and the five-year average. The crop was rated 49 percent ripe for the week ending August 10, compared with 31 percent last year and the average of 42 percent. Harvest is underway with 21 percent complete compared with 11 percent last year and 19 percent for the five-year average. **Durum wheat** production is forecast to be 16.0 million bushels, up 23 percent from last year but down 14 percent from July. The expected yield of 25.0 bushels per acre is down 4 bushels from last month but is 2 bushels more than the 2002 average. Harvested acres are unchanged from July at 640,000 acres.

Barley yields are expected to average 44.0 bushels per acre in 2003, 2 bushels better than last year, but 7 bushels lower than July. Barley production is forecast to be 41.8 million bushels compared with 39.9 million produced last year. Growers expect to harvest 950,000 acres, unchanged from 2002. For the week ending August 10, barley condition was reported to be 17 percent very poor, 22 percent poor, 26 percent fair, 28 percent good, and 7 percent excellent. Harvest was reported to be 23 percent complete compared with 14 percent last year and 24 percent for the five-year average.

Oat producers expect to harvest 3.06 million bushels of grain, 13 percent more than last year. The 2003 area for harvest is expected to be 65,000 acres compared with 55,000 harvested for grain in 2002. The expected yield of 47.0 bushels is 2 bushels less than last year's yield. As of August 10, the condition of the oat crop was reported to be 11 percent very poor, 17 percent poor, 33 percent fair, 28 percent good, and 11 percent excellent. Harvest was reported to be 27 percent complete compared with 25 percent last year and 20 percent for the five-year average.

Sugar beet production is forecast to be 1.201 million tons, up 10 percent from last year. The expected yield, at 23.0 tons per acre, is up 17 percent from the 19.6 tons per acre last year. Producers are expecting to harvest 52,200 acres, down 3,700 acres from last year. **Dry edible bean** growers expect to harvest 17,000 acres this year, down 6,000 acres from 2002. Yield is estimated at 19.20 cwt., 3.50 cwt. per acre better than the previous year. All dry bean production is expected to be 326,000 cwt., down 10 percent from last year's figure. The reduction in dry edible bean acreage is attributed to reduced garbanzo bean seedings.

Alfalfa hay is expected to yield 2.10 tons per acre in 2003, unchanged from the previous year. Growers plan to harvest 1.65 million acres, up 18 percent from last year's 1.40 million acres. Production is expected at 3.465 million tons, an 18 percent increase over the 2002 production figure. As of August 10, 100 percent of first cutting and 58 percent of second cutting had been completed on alfalfa hay. Grower comments during the last survey period suggest many farmers will only see one cutting of alfalfa this season due to drought conditions. The average yield for **other hay** is forecast to be 1.30 tons per acre, down 0.10 ton per acre from last year. Production of other hay is forecast at 1.30 million tons, a decrease of 23 percent from 2002. Again, many growers expect just one cutting this year. As of August 10, 98 percent of first cutting and 27 percent of second cutting of other hay had been completed.

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In the United States, **all wheat** production is placed at 2.29 billion bushels, down 1 percent from the July forecast but up 42 percent from 2002. Based on August 1 conditions, the U.S. yield is forecast at 43.5 bushels per acre, down 0.4 bushels from last month. The final Winter wheat production forecast is 1.71 billion bushels. This is down slightly from last month but 50 percent above 2002. The U.S. yield is forecast at 46.9 bushels per acre, down 0.1 bushels from last month. **Other spring wheat** production is forecast at 492 million bushels, down 2 percent from last month but 25 percent above 2002. Acreage intended for harvest is unchanged from last month. The U.S. yield is forecast at 36.6 bushels per acre, 0.7 bushels less than July 1. **Durum wheat** production is forecast at 87.4 million bushels, down 7 percent from last month but up 10 percent from 2002. The U.S. yield is forecast at 31.9 bushels per acre, 2.2 bushels less than last month.

Nationally, **barley** production for 2003 is forecast at 281 million bushels, down 3 percent from the July forecast but 24 percent above 2002. Based on August 1 conditions, producers expect to harvest an average of 57.5 bushels per acre, down 2.0 bushels from July but up 2.6 bushels from last year. Area harvested, at 4.90 million acres, is unchanged from the July estimate but up 18 percent from 2002.

U.S. **oats** production for 2003 is forecast at 151 million bushels, 2 percent above the July 1 forecast and 27 percent above last year's 119 million bushels. Area for harvest is estimated at 2.33 million acres, 2 percent more than July 1 and 11 percent more than last year. The forecasted yield is 64.9 bushels per acre, 0.2 bushels above the July 1 forecast and up 8.1 bushels from 2002.

Dry edible bean production in the United States is forecast at 24.3 million cwt in 2003, down 19 percent from last year but 24 percent above two years ago. Acreage adjustments since the June Acreage Report lowered planted acreage estimates 1 percent and reduced harvested expectations by 2 percent. Planted area is now estimated at 1.50 million acres, 22 percent below last year but 5 percent greater than two years ago. Harvested acreage is forecast at 1.42 million acres, down 18 percent from last year but 14 percent above 2001. The average U.S. yield is forecast at 1,717 pounds per acre, a loss of 19 pounds from last year but 148 pounds more than two years ago.

U.S. **alfalfa and alfalfa Mixtures** production is forecast at 78.0 million tons, up 6 percent from last year. Yields are expected to average 3.31, up 0.12 ton from last year. Harvested area is 23.5 million acres, unchanged from the June estimate but up 2 percent from 2002. **Other hay** production is forecast at 82.1 million tons, up 6 percent from 2002. Based on August 1 conditions, yields are expected to average 2.01 tons, up 8 percent from last year and if realized would be at a record high. Harvested acreage is estimated at 40.8 million, unchanged from the June estimate but down 1 percent from 2002.

Sugar beet production in the United States for 2003 is forecast at 30.5 million tons. If realized, this would be 10 percent above last year's production. Growers in the 12 sugarbeet-producing States expect to harvest 1.34 million acres, up slightly from the June estimate but 1 percent below last year. The yield is forecast at 22.7 tons per acre, 2.3 tons above 2002 and, if realized, would be the second highest yield on record.

Crop Contacts: Thomas Chard for wheat and sugar beets; John Gibbons for barley, hay, and dry edible beans; Eric Siebens for oats.

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Agricultural Prices Received for July 2003

For immediate release: August 29, 2003
For more information contact: Eric Siebens or Peggy Stringer at 1-800-835-2612.

July full month crop prices were mostly lower compared with June 2003, according to the Montana Agricultural Statistics Service. Montana's winter wheat average price was $3.15 per bushel, down $0.10 from the previous month; spring wheat dropped $0.20 to $3.43 per bushel; and durum wheat prices lost $0.34 to $4.07 per bushel. Feed barley prices decreased $0.12 from the previous month to $2.00, but malt barley prices jumped $0.35 to $3.39 per bushel.

The mid-August price for alfalfa hay was down $1.00 to $75.00 per ton and all other hay dropped $8.00 to $68.00 per ton. The mid-August grain prices were mostly all higher with winter wheat price averaging $3.47 per bushel; spring wheat was $3.62; durum wheat was $4.01; feed barley was $2.05; and malt barley averaged $3.40.

Livestock prices for the full month of July were mostly higher compared with the previous month. Steer and heifer prices increased $4.70 to $84.60 per cwt, and cows rose $2.50 to $48.20. The average price for calves jumped $5.00 to $102.00 per cwt. Sheep prices decreased $0.90 to $26.20 per cwt and lamb prices fell $10.20 to $92.80 per cwt. Milk prices increased $0.20 per cwt from last month to $11.20 per cwt. Steer and heifer prices for mid-August averaged $85.60 per cwt.; cows averaged $47.60 per cwt.; calves averaged $106.00 per cwt.; and milk prices averaged $11.50 per cwt.

Nationally, prices for July and changes from June were as follows: winter wheat was $2.89, down $0.04, spring wheat was $3.29, down $0.17; durum wheat was $3.85, down $0.14; the all barley price was $2.74, down $0.27, and steer and heifer prices were $78.80, up $0.10 per cwt.

The U.S. mid-August winter wheat price was $3.39 per bushel, spring wheat was $3.51 per bushel, durum wheat was $3.74 per bushel, all wheat was $3.44 per bushel, malt barley was $2.84 per bushel, feed barley was $2.02 per bushel, and all barley was $2.58. Steer and heifer prices were $ 81.70 per cwt, cow prices were $44.80, calves were $105.00 per cwt., all hog prices were $41.10 per cwt, and all egg prices were $0.669 per dozen.

The preliminary All Farm Products Index of Prices Received by Farmers in August was 101, based on 1990-92=100, up 1 point (1.0 percent) from the July index. Higher prices for corn, wheat, strawberries, and lettuce more than offset decreased prices for hogs, broilers, grapes, and potatoes. The seasonal change in the mix of commodities farmers sell often affects the overall index. Higher marketings for tobacco, cattle, grapes, and sweet corn more than offset decreased marketings of wheat, hay, milk, and strawberries.

The current All Farm Products Index is 9 points (8.2 percent) below August, 2001. Lower prices for broilers, hogs, cattle, and lettuce more than offset higher prices for corn, wheat, soybeans, and grapes. The Food Commodities Index increased by 1 point (1.0 percent) over last month to 99, but was 14 points (12 percent) below August last year.

#end#

MONTANA AVERAGE FARM PRICES RECEIVED

	Monthly Average				Change From		Mid-Month Avg.	
BASE MONTH: July 2003	MONTANA			U.S.	Prev Mo	Prev Yr	Montana	U.S.
	July 2002	June 2003	July 2003	July 2003	June 2003	July 2002	Aug 15 2003	Aug 15 2003
Winter Wheat....	3.41	3.25	3.15	2.89	-0.10	-0.26	3.47	3.39
Durum Wheat.....	3.61	4.41	4.07	3.85	-0.34	+0.46	4.01	3.74
Spring Wheat....	3.31	3.63	3.43	3.29	-0.20	+0.12	3.62	3.51
Wheat, All......	3.36	3.68	3.51	2.95	-0.17	+0.15	3.67	3.44
Barley..........	2.45	2.26	2.96	2.74	+0.70	+0.51	2.98	2.58
Feed Barley.....	2.08	2.12	2.00	2.23	-0.12	-0.08	2.05	2.02
Malt Barley.....	2.94	3.04	3.39	3.08	+0.35	+0.45	3.40	2.84
Oats............	N/A	N/A	1.69	1.47	0	0	N/A	1.42
Alfalfa Hay.....	85.00	79.00	76.00	92.70	-3.00	-9.00	75.00	91.00
All Other Hay...	76.00	72.00	73.00	77.80	+1.00	-3.00	68.00	69.10
All Hay Baled...	84.00	78.00	76.00	89.00	-2.00	-8.00	73.00	85.30
Steer & Heifers.	74.80	79.90	84.60	78.80	+4.70	+9.80	85.60	81.70
Cows............	36.70	45.70	48.20	44.90	+2.50	+11.50	47.60	44.80
Beef Cattle.....	53.80	56.30	66.80	75.80	+10.50	+13.00	76.10	78.50
Calves..........	90.00	97.00	102.00	103.00	+5.00	+12.00	106.00	105.00
Sheep...........	24.70	29.10	26.20	28.60	-2.90	+1.50	N/A	N/A
Lambs...........	79.10	103.00	92.80	89.40	-10.20	+13.70	N/A	N/A
All Milk........	12.30	11.00	11.20	12.00	+0.20	-1.10	11.50	13.00

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Maltsters and Brewers Purchased 9.3 Million Bushels of the 2002 Barley Crop

For immediate release: September 19, 2003
For more information contact: John Gibbons or Curtis Lund at 1-800-835-2612

Maltsters and brewers purchased 9.3 million bushels of Montana's 2002 barley crop to make malt, up 23 percent from 2001, according to a recent survey conducted by the Montana Agricultural Statistics Service. The survey was requested and funded by the Montana Wheat and Barley Committee. The average protein of the 2002 malting crop was 13.0 percent, which is 0.8 point more than the average protein of the 2001 crop.

Montana growers seeded 1.20 million acres of barley in 2002, up 100,000 acres from 2001. Of the total, over 740,000 acres were seeded to malting type varieties. If the yield of malting varieties equaled the state average yield per planted acre for all barley, then approximately 24.6 million bushels of malting type would have been produced. Because only 9.3 million bushels were used for malt, the remaining 15.3 million bushels did not make malting grade or exceeded demand for malting barley. The barley utilized for malt represented approximately 23 percent of the 2002 total barley crop, compared with 26 and 34 percent in 2001 and 2000, respectively.

Harrington was the most frequently purchased variety by maltsters and brewers and represented 37 percent of the total purchases. Anheuser-Busch varieties, at 36 percent of total, were the second most commonly purchased. Fifty-eight percent of all malt barley purchased was grown in north central Montana, compared to 71 percent last year. South central Montana growers produced 23 percent of the total.

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Montana 2002 Potato Production Drops 2 Percent, U.S. Up 5 Percent

For immediate release: September 19, 2003
For more information please contact: Eric Siebens or Curtis Lund at 1-800-835-2612.

Montana's 2002 potato production totaled 3,224,000 cwt., 2 percent below last year and 8 percent lower than 2000's production. Producers harvested 10,400 acres, 100 more than a year ago, but 900 acres fewer than two years ago. Potato yields averaged 310 cwt. per acre compared with 320 cwt. in 2001 and 310 cwt. in 2000.

Value of production from the 2002 crop was $26.6 million, down 12 percent from 2001. The average price was $8.25 per cwt., a decrease of $0.90 from the previous year's crop. Sales of Montana's 2002 potato crop totaled $24.23 million, which is 10 percent below last year's crop. Producers sold 2,937,000 cwt. from the 2002 crop compared with 2,956,000 cwt. a year ago.

U.S. total 2002 potato production is estimated at 460 million cwt, 1 percent below the estimate made in the Annual Crop Summary in January but up 5 percent from the 2001 crop. Harvested area, at 1.27 million acres, increased 4 percent from a year ago. The average yield of 362 cwt per acre is up 4 cwt from 2001 but 19 cwt below the average yield from the 2000 crop. By season, winter production went up 2 percent, spring rose 7 percent, summer fell 1 percent, and fall increased 5 percent from the previous year.

Winter and spring seasonal estimates are carried forward from earlier revisions. Summer potato production is revised to 18.0 million cwt for 2002, down 1 percent from 2001. Harvested area, at 59,100 acres, is up 1 percent from the previous year. The average yield of 304 cwt per acre is 6 cwt below the previous year.

Fall potatoes are finalized at 414 million cwt for 2002, up 5 percent from the 2001 crop. Area harvested in 2002 is estimated at 1.11 million acres, up 3 percent from a year earlier. The average yield, at 373 cwt per acre, is up 6 cwt from the a year ago. Final production of fall potatoes is 1 percent below the Annual Crop Summary in January.

Value of all potato production in 2002 is estimated at $3.07 billion, up less than 1 percent from the previous year. The average price, at $6.69 per cwt, went down $0.30 from a year earlier.

Sales from the 2002 potato crop totaled 423 million cwt, up 5 percent from 2001. Sales accounted for 92 percent of 2002 production. Non sales accounted for 36.6 million cwt, virtually unchanged from the previous year. Over the past five years, 91 percent of the potatoes grown have been sold. The other 9 percent were either lost (shrinkage and loss) or used on farms where grown (seed, home use, and livestock feed).

Processors used 263 million cwt of raw potatoes from the 2002 crop, up 5 percent from a year earlier. Table stock sales totaled 133 million cwt, 9 percent above the previous year. Seed sales of 24.1 million cwt are down 1 percent. Sales for livestock feed, at 3.10 million cwt, are down 11 percent from a year earlier.

Potatoes used for chips and shoestrings totaled 51.6 million cwt in 2002, down 5 percent from the previous year. Frozen french fries and other frozen products utilized 154 million cwt of raw potatoes, up 2 percent. Potatoes used for dehydrating totaled 51.3 million cwt, an increase of 26 percent. Canning use, at 4.83 million cwt, rose 12 percent. Starch, flour, and other products are made from 1.05 million cwt of potatoes, up 3 percent from the previous year.

Shrinkage and loss is estimated at 31.0 million cwt for 2002, down 1 percent from 2001. Livestock feed on potato farms and home use totaled 1.47 million cwt, 18 percent above the previous season. Growers kept 4.16 million cwt for seed on their own farms, virtually unchanged from a year earlier.

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Agricultural Resource Management Survey to Be Conducted

For immediate release: September 23, 2003
For more information contact: Steven Hirsch or Curtis Lund at 1-800-835-2612

(Helena, Montana) How are changes in farm programs affecting agricultural productivity? What land conservation practices are agricultural producers using? To answer these questions and gather reliable, objective information about U.S. agriculture, the Montana Agricultural Statistics Service (MASS) will conduct the Agricultural Resource Management Survey on production practices for barley grown for harvest as grain.

This survey will gather information on crop production practices, chemical applications, and pest management practices from October through December 2003. In addition, cost of production data will be obtained. Fewer than 12,000 of the Nation's two million farmers will be asked to participate in the survey, so every response is critical. Some 275 producers in Montana will be included.

Producers selected to participate in the Agricultural Resource Management Survey will be making an important contribution to the overall welfare of the U.S. agricultural community. This survey gives participants an opportunity to set the record straight about issues that affect them, such as use of fertilizers and pesticides on these crops. Results from this survey will be used to develop agricultural production practices that improve productivity for farm operators and ensure a safer, cleaner working environment for producers, their families, and communities. All survey information will be merged and used by commodity analysts, producer organizations, and others to benefit Montana farmers and ranchers.

Montana farm operators selected to participate in this year's survey are being notified by letter, and interviewers will visit them personally to collect their reports at their convenience. USDA will use the results to publish information on agricultural chemical usage and analyze commodity production costs and returns in a series of reports in 2004.

The Agricultural Resource Management Survey is one way that USDA and producers work together to provide the meaningful, accurate, and objective statistical information and services that help keep U.S. agriculture and rural communities among the most robust in the world.

"We safeguard the confidentiality of all survey responses," said Peggy Stringer, State Statistician. "Data about individual operations are used only in conjunction with information from other producers."

All agricultural statistics published by NASS are available at *www.usda.gov/nass/.* For additional information on ARMS visit the Economic Research Service (ERS) Web site at www.ers.usda.gov.

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Conservation Effects Assessment Project (CEAP) Survey to Begin

For immediate release: September 23, 2003
For more information contact: Steven Hirsch or Curtis Lund at 1-800-835-2612

(Helena, Montana) Do conservation practices improve water, soil, and air quality? Do conservation practices enhance wildlife habitat across this country? To help answer these questions, the USDA's Montana Agricultural Statistics Service (MASS) will conduct the National Resource Inventory - Conservation Effects Assessment Project in October.

The resulting information will be added to other sources to create a complete picture of environmental and conservation management conditions. Answers from this survey will be used to estimate the potential benefits that have been achieved by farm conservation programs.

MASS works with farmers and ranchers to provide meaningful, accurate, and objective statistics that help keep U.S. Agriculture informed. This survey provides farmers and ranchers with an important opportunity to help ensure that conservation programs continue to provide America's working lands with the assistance needed to remain both healthy and productive in the future.

"We safeguard the confidentiality of all survey responses," Peggy Stringer, State Statistician said. "Data from individual operations is combined with other responses to provide the needed data. We will not disclose any data about an individual operation."

Annual progress reports will be published by the National Resource Conservation Service beginning in 2005. All agricultural statistics published by NASS are available at *www.usda.gov/nass/*. For more information, call 1-800-835-2612.

#end#

Find agricultural statistics for your county, State, and the Nation at www.usda.gov/nass/.

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Agricultural Prices Received for August 2003

For immediate release: September 30, 2003
For more information contact: Eric Siebens or Curtis Lund at 1-800-835-2612.

August full month crop prices were mostly higher compared with July 2003, according to the Montana Agricultural Statistics Service. Montana's winter wheat average price was $3.27 per bushel, up $0.12 from the previous month; spring wheat moved up $0.05 to $3.48 per bushel; and durum wheat prices decreased $0.06 to $4.01 per bushel. Feed barley prices decreased $0.01 from the previous month to $1.99, malt barley prices increased $0.03 to $3.42 per bushel.

The mid-September price for alfalfa hay was up $1.00 to $76.00 per ton and all other hay increased $3.00 to $71.00 per ton. The mid-September grain prices were mostly higher with winter wheat price averaging $3.32 per bushel; spring wheat was $3.57; durum wheat was $3.81; feed barley was $2.23; and malt barley averaged $3.41.

Livestock prices for the full month of August were mostly higher compared with the previous month. Steer and heifer prices increased $2.00 to $86.60 per cwt, while cows fell $0.70 to $47.50. The average price for calves increased $4.00 to $106.00 per cwt. Sheep prices decreased $0.20 to $26.00 per cwt and lamb prices jumped $5.30 to $98.10 per cwt. Milk prices rose $0.50 per cwt from last month to $11.70 per cwt. Steer and heifer prices for mid-September averaged $87.60 per cwt.; cows averaged $48.80 per cwt.; calves averaged $105.00 per cwt.; and milk prices averaged $12.40 per cwt.

Nationally, prices for August and changes from July were as follows: winter wheat was $3.28, up $0.39, spring wheat was $3.39, up $0.10; durum wheat was $3.78, down $0.07; the all barley price was $2.91, down $0.17, and steer and heifer prices were $83.50, up $4.70 per cwt.

The U.S. mid-September winter wheat price was $3.25 per bushel, spring wheat was $3.33 per bushel, durum wheat was $3.54 per bushel, all wheat was $3.29 per bushel, malt barley was $2.85 per bushel, feed barley was $2.23 per bushel, and all barley was $2.65. Steer and heifer prices were $88.20 per cwt, cow prices were $46.00, calves were $106.00 per cwt., all hog prices were $39.20 per cwt, and all egg prices were $0.634 per dozen.

The preliminary All Farm Products Index of Prices Received by Farmers in September is 109, based on 1990-92=100, unchanged from the August index. Since last month, a higher Livestock and Products Index more than offset a lower All Crops Index. Higher commodity prices for cattle, lettuce, dairy, and broccoli more than offset lower prices for tomatoes, eggs, potatoes, and grapes. The seasonal change in the mix of commodities farmers sell, based on the past 3-year average, also affects the overall index. Increased average marketings of soybeans, peanuts, corn, and apples more than offset decreased marketings of cattle, broilers, wheat, and grapes.

This preliminary All Farm Products Index is up 11 points (11.2 percent) from September 2002. Higher prices for cattle, hogs, broilers, and lettuce more than offset lower prices for corn, wheat, potatoes, and hay.

#end#

MONTANA AVERAGE FARM PRICES RECEIVED

	Monthly Average				Change From		Mid-Month Avg.	
BASE MONTH: August 2003	MONTANA			U.S.	Prev Mo	Prev Yr	Montana	U.S.
	Aug 2002	July 2003	Aug 2003	Aug 2003	July 2003	Aug 2002	Sept15 2003	Sept15 2003
Winter Wheat....	3.65	3.15	3.27	3.28	+0.12	-0.38	3.32	3.25
Durum Wheat.....	3.78	4.07	4.01	3.78	-0.06	+0.23	3.81	3.54
Spring Wheat....	3.63	3.43	3.48	3.39	+0.05	-0.15	3.57	3.33
Wheat, All......	3.65	3.51	3.46	3.34	-0.05	-0.19	3.49	3.29
Barley..........	3.07	2.96	3.14	2.91	+0.18	+0.07	3.17	2.65
Feed Barley.....	2.09	2.00	1.99	2.40	-0.01	-0.10	2.23	2.23
Malt Barley.....	3.22	3.39	3.42	3.13	+0.03	+0.20	3.41	2.85
Oats............	2.18	1.69	1.73	1.39	+0.04	-0.45	N/A	1.39
Alfalfa Hay.....	86.00	76.00	75.00	91.00	-1.00	-11.00	76.00	89.00
All Other Hay...	77.00	73.00	68.00	69.10	-5.00	-9.00	71.00	70.10
All Hay Baled...	84.00	76.00	73.00	85.30	-3.00	-11.00	75.00	84.20
Steer & Heifers.	74.90	84.60	86.60	83.50	+2.00	+11.70	87.60	88.20
Cows............	36.60	48.20	47.50	44.60	-0.70	+10.90	48.80	46.00
Beef Cattle.....	62.60	66.80	78.00	79.90	+11.20	+15.40	84.10	84.00
Calves..........	91.60	102.00	106.00	107.00	+4.00	+14.40	105.00	106.00
Sheep...........	23.70	26.20	26.00	28.30	-0.20	+2.30	N/A	N/A
Lambs...........	75.90	92.80	98.10	87.60	+5.30	+22.20	N/A	N/A
All Milk........	11.80	11.20	11.70	13.20	+0.50	-0.10	12.40	14.00

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September 1, 2003 Grain Stocks

For immediate release: September 30, 2003
For more information contact: Thomas Chard or Curtis Lund at 1-800-835-2612.

Stocks of **all wheat** in Montana on September 1, 2003 were 156.5 million bushels, up 12 percent from a year ago due to higher winter wheat yields and more acres harvested, according to the Montana Agricultural Statistics Service. All wheat stocks stored on the farm amounted to 130.0 million bushels, up 16 percent from a year ago. All wheat stored off-farm amounted to 26.5 million bushels, down 3 percent from a year ago. All wheat disappearance for the June - August 2003 quarter was down 8 percent from the same quarter last year to 22.7 million bushels, compared with 24.6 million a year ago.

Barley stocks in all positions on September 1, 2003 were 35.2 million bushels, down 14 percent from a year ago. Barley stored on-farms was 28.0 million bushels, down 22 percent from last year. Off-farm storage of barley was up 52 percent from a year ago to 7.2 million bushels. **Oats** stocks in all positions were 2.3 million bushels, down 22 percent from last year. On-farm stocks of oats were 2.2 million bushels, down 21 percent from a year ago. Oats stored off-farm were down 37 percent from last year to 60,000 bushels.

In the **United States all wheat** stored in all positions on September 1, 2003 totaled 2.04 billion bushels, up 16 percent from a year ago. On-farm stocks are estimated at 690 million bushels, up 19 percent from last year. Off-farm stocks, at 1.35 billion bushels, are up 15 percent from a year ago. The June - August 2003 indicated disappearance is 792 million bushels, up 23 percent from the same period a year earlier.

Durum wheat stocks in all positions on September 1, 2003 totaled 87.2 million bushels, down 6 percent from a year ago. On-farm stocks, at 58.0 million bushels, are down 12 percent from September 1, 2002. Off-farm stocks totaled 29.2 million bushels, up 9 percent from a year ago. The June - August 2003 indicated disappearance of 37.5 million bushels is up 91 percent from the same period a year earlier.

Barley stocks in all positions on September 1, 2003 totaled 239 million bushels, up 7 percent from September, 2002. On-farm stocks are estimated at 140 million bushels, 6 percent above a year ago. Off-farm stocks, at 99.1 million bushels, are 7 percent above September 2002. Indicated disappearance during the June - August 2003 quarter totaled 106 million bushels, up 12 percent from the same period a year earlier.

Oats stored in all positions on September 1, 2003 totaled 132 million bushels, 18 percent above the stocks on September 1, 2002. Of the total stocks on hand, 82.1 million bushels are stored on farms, 16 percent more than a year ago. Off-farm stocks totaled 49.4 million bushels, 20 percent above a year earlier. Indicated disappearance during June - August 2003 totaled 63.0 million bushels, down 10 percent from the same period a year ago.

#end#

September 1 Grain Stocks

GRAIN and POSITION	MONTANA				UNITED STATES		
	Sept. 1, 2002	June 1, 2003	Sept. 1, 2003	'03/'02	Sept. 1, 2002	June 1, 2003*	Sept. 1, 2003
	Thousand Bushels			Percent	Thousand Bushels		
ALL WHEAT 2/, 3/							
On Farms	112,000	29,000	130,000	116%	580,200	132,110	689,970
Off Farms 1/	27,250	12,590	26,470	97%	1,170,787	359,306	1,345,635
TOTAL	139,250	41,590	156,470	112%	1,750,987	491,416	2,035,605
BARLEY							
On Farms	36,000	4,500	28,000	78%	131,600	14,860	139,900
Off Farms 1/	4,760	1,630	7,230	152%	92,419	54,480	99,125
TOTAL	40,760	6,130	35,230	86%	224,019	69,340	239,025
OATS							
On Farms	2,800	900	2,200	79%	70,500	20,600	82,100
Off Farms 1/	95	75	60	63%	41,212	29,233	49,421
TOTAL	2,895	975	2,260	78%	111,712	49,833	131,521
CORN							
On Farms	--	--	--	--	586,800	1,620,200	484,900
Off Farms 1/	--	--	--	--	1,009,626	1,364,485	600,869
TOTAL	--	--	--	--	1,596,426	2,984,685	1,085,769

1/ Terminals, mills, interior elevators. 2/ Montana stocks for winter wheat and all spring wheat are no longer available due to funding cuts by the Montana Wheat & Barley Committee. 3/ Included in all spring wheat and all wheat. * Revised.

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September 2003 Small Grain Summary

For immediate release: September 30, 2003
For more information please contact: Thomas Chard or Curtis Lund at 1-800-835-2612.

All wheat production, at 137.5 million bushels, is up 25 percent from the 2002 crop of 109.9 million bushels, according to the Montana Agricultural Statistics Service. **Montana's 2003 winter wheat** production was 63.6 million bushels, more than three times greater than last year's crop due to higher yields and more acres harvested. Producers seeded 1.80 million acres, up 350,000 acres from 2002 and is the largest planted acreage since 1996. Producers harvested 1.72 million acres, up from 750,000 acres last year. The 2003 average yield was unchanged from the last forecast, at 37.0 bushels per acre, and is 9 bushels higher than 2002. Favorable weather conditions and above average rainfall during the spring helped boost plant counts, however extreme heat during the summer reduced head weights.

Spring wheat production in Montana was 59.4 million bushels, down 22 percent from 2002 due to fewer acres seeded and harvested. The final seeded acreage was 2.85 million acres, down 900,000 acres from last year. This is the smallest acreage planted since 1993. Producers harvested 2.7 million acres, down 750,000 acres from the previous year. Yields averaged 22.0 bushels per acre, down 2 bushels from the last forecast, but unchanged from 2002. High temperatures and lack of moisture experienced during the critical stages of crop development significantly reduced yields from early season forecasts.

Montana **durum wheat** growers seeded 640,000 acres, up 8 percent from last year. Producers harvested 630,000 acres, up 65,000 acres from 2002. This is the largest acreage planted since 1956 when 1.017 million acres were planted. The average yield was 23.0 bushels per acre, unchanged from last year, but down 2 bushels from the last forecast. Total production was estimated at 14.5 million bushels, up 12 percent from last year due to more acres harvested. Extreme heat and lack of moisture during head development reduced yields.

Montana seeded 1.10 million acres to **barley**, 100,000 acres fewer than the previous year. This is the lowest acreage number since 2001, when 1.10 million acres were also seeded. Producers harvested 810,000 acres, 140,000 fewer than were harvested for grain in 2002. A combination of factors, including increased demand for barley hay, poor protein grades, and abandonment due to drought conditions led to the decrease in harvested acres. The final yield for 2003 averaged 39.0 bushels per acre, down 3 bushels from last year, and down 5 bushels from the last forecast. This is the lowest yield since 1988, when it averaged 24 bushels per acre. Production was estimated at 31.6 million bushels, down 21 percent from last year due to lower yields and fewer acres harvested.

Oat production in Montana was estimated at 1.98 million bushels, down 27 percent from last year. Planted acreage was estimated at 120,000 acres, down 25,000 acres from 2002. Harvested acreage was set at 45,000 acres, down 10,000 from last year. Yields averaged 44.0 bushels per acre, 5 bushels below 2002 and 3 bushels below the previous estimate.

U.S. All wheat production totaled 2.34 billion bushels in 2003, up 2 percent from the last forecast and 44 percent above 2002. Grain area is 52.8 million acres, up 15 percent from last year. The U.S. yield is 44.2 bushels per acre, up 8.9 bushels from a year ago. Levels of production and change from last year by type are: **winter wheat**, 1.71 billion bushels, up 49 percent; **other spring wheat**, 533 million bushels, up 35 percent; and **durum wheat**, 96.6 million bushels, up 22 percent.

The 2003 **U.S. winter wheat** production is estimated at 1.71 billion bushels. This is down less than 1 percent from the August forecast but 49 percent above last year's drought reduced crop. The U.S. yield decreased 0.2 bushel from August to 46.7 bushels per acre. This is 8.2 bushels above last year's final yield, and the third highest yield on record. Acreage for grain is estimated at 36.5 million acres, up slightly from the last forecast and 23 percent above 2002. Planted area is 44.9 million acres, up 1 percent from the last forecast.

Other spring wheat in the U.S. production in 2003 is estimated at 533 million bushels, up 8 percent from the last forecast and 35 percent above 2002. Harvested area is 13.4 million acres, slightly lower than the August forecast and last year. The U.S. yield is 39.7 bushels per acre, 3.1 bushels higher than the last forecast and 10.4 bushels better than last year's drought reduced crop.

U.S. Durum wheat production for 2003 totaled 96.6 million bushels, up 11 percent from August 1 and 22 percent more than last year. Grain area harvested totaled 2.87 million acres, up 5 percent from the last forecast and 6 percent above a year ago. The U.S. yield is estimated at 33.7 bushels per acre, up 1.8 bushel from the last forecast and 4.3 bushels per acre above 2002.

Barley production for the U.S. is estimated at 276 million bushels, down 2 percent from the last forecast but up 22 percent from last year. Average yield per acre, at 58.9 bushels, is up 1.4 bushels from the last forecast and 4.0 bushels above 2002. The area harvested for grain is estimated at 4.69 million acres, down 4 percent from August but 14 percent above a year ago. Barley production is estimated at 276 million bushels, down 2 percent from the last forecast but up 22 percent from last year's estimate. Average yield per acre, at 58.9 bushels, is up 1.4 bushels from the last forecast and 4.0 bushels above 2002. The area harvested for grain is estimated at 4.69 million acres, 14 percent above a year ago.

U.S. oats production is estimated at 145 million bushels, 4 percent below the August 1 forecast but 22 percent above last year's 119 million bushels. The estimated yield is 65.0 bushels per acre, nearly the same as the August 1 forecast and up 8.3 bushels from a year ago. Harvested area is 2.22 million acres, 5 percent below the August 1 forecast but 6 percent above last year.

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October 1, 2003 Montana All Hay and Sugar Beet Production Forecast Up from 2002

For immediate release: October 10, 2003
For more information call 1-800-835-2612: Curtis Lund, Deputy State Statistician

Alfalfa hay yield in Montana remains unchanged from the August forecast of 2.10 tons per acre, according to the Montana Agricultural Statistics Service. Total production of alfalfa hay is estimated to be 3.465 million tons, up 18 percent from the previous year. Harvested acreage, at 1.65 million for alfalfa, also remained unchanged from August, but represents a 250,000 acre increase from 2002. Rain early in the growing season and more water for irrigation enabled many growers to get at least one cutting of alfalfa on more acreage than the previous year. **Other hay** yield did not change from August's forecast, and is estimated at 1.30 tons per acre, down 0.10 ton per acre from last year . Other hay production is expected to be 1.30 million tons, down 23 percent from 2002. Other hay harvested acreage is unchanged from August at 1.0 million acres, but is down 200,000 acres from 2002. **All hay** production is estimated at 4.765 million tons, up 3 percent from last year. Overall, the increase in production is attributed to increased acreage, however the long hot summer and lack of precipitation since June decreased yields and limited many dryland producers to a single cutting.

Montana **sugar beet** production is forecast at 1.305 million tons, unchanged from last month's forecast, but is up 19 percent from 2002. Forecasted yield, at 25.0 tons per acre, is unchanged from last month, but is up 5.4 tons per acre from last year. Harvested acreage is forecast to be 52,200 acres, down 3,700 acres from last year. Sugar beet harvest is ahead of last year with 22 percent of the beets pulled for the week ending October 5, compared with the 5-year average of 25 percent.

Nationally, hay production, for **alfalfa** and alfalfa mixtures, is forecast at 78.5 million tons, up less than 1 percent from the August forecast and 6 percent above 2002. Yields are expected to average 3.34 tons per acre, up 0.03 ton from the August forecast and 0.15 ton from last year. Harvested area is 23.5 million acres, unchanged from the August estimate but up 2 percent from 2002. Dry conditions in Michigan, Minnesota, and Wisconsin hindered growth and development while providing excellent harvesting conditions. U.S. **Other hay** production is forecast at 82.2 million tons, virtually the same as August but up 7 percent from 2002. Based on October 1 conditions, yields are expected to average 2.01 tons, the same as the August forecast but 0.15 ton above last year. If realized, this will be a record high yield. Harvested acreage is estimated at 40.8 million, unchanged from the August estimate but down 1 percent from 2002. Record high yields are forecast for Kentucky, Louisiana, North Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia, Washington, and West Virginia due to abundant rainfall during the growing season. In the central Great Plains, the lack of rainfall in August stressed crops and limited yields, but they remain higher than last year.

Sugarbeet production for the U.S. is forecast at 29.9 million tons, 3 percent below the September forecast but 8 percent above last year's production. Growers in the 12 sugarbeet-producing States expect to harvest 1.35 million acres. This is virtually unchanged from the September forecast but 1 percent below last year. The yield is forecast at 22.2 tons per acre, 0.6 ton below the September forecast but 1.8 tons above 2002. Most States began harvest near the end of September. In both Minnesota and North Dakota, 11 percent of the crop was harvested as of September 28, slightly behind the 5-year average in each State.

Crop Contacts: Christel Pachl for sugar beets; John Gibbons for hay.

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Agricultural Prices Received for September 2003

For immediate release: October 31, 2003
For more information contact: Eric Siebens or Peggy Stringer at 1-800-835-2612.

September full month crop prices were higher compared with August 2003, according to the Montana Agricultural Statistics Service. Montana's winter wheat average price was $3.36 per bushel, up $0.09 from the previous month; spring wheat moved up $0.04 to $3.52 per bushel; and durum wheat prices gained $0.15 to $4.16 per bushel. Feed barley prices increased $0.11 from the previous month to $2.10, and malt barley prices were unchanged at $3.42 per bushel.

The mid-October price for alfalfa hay was up $1.00 to $77.00 per ton and all other hay held steady at $71.00 per ton. The mid-October grain prices were mixed with winter wheat price averaging $3.16 per bushel; spring wheat was $3.44; durum wheat was $4.05; feed barley was $2.12; and malt barley averaged $3.43.

Livestock prices for the full month of September were higher compared with August 2003. Steer and heifer prices increased $3.90 to $90.50 per cwt and cows rose $1.60 to $49.10. The average price for calves was unchanged at $106.00 per cwt. Sheep prices rose $6.00 to $32.00 per cwt and lamb prices jumped $7.90 to $106.00 per cwt. Milk prices were up $1.30 per cwt from last month to $13.00 per cwt. Steer and heifer prices for mid-October averaged $95.40 per cwt.; cows averaged $49.00 per cwt.; calves averaged $108.00 per cwt.; and milk prices averaged $14.50 per cwt.

Nationally, prices for September and changes from August were as follows: winter wheat was $3.32, up $0.04, spring wheat was $3.42, up $0.03; durum wheat was $3.94, up $0.16; the all barley price was $2.88, down $0.03, and steer and heifer prices were $89.40, up $5.90 per cwt.

The U.S. mid-October winter wheat price was $3.14 per bushel, spring wheat was $3.30 per bushel, durum wheat was $3.90 per bushel, all wheat was $3.23 per bushel, malt barley was $2.80 per bushel, feed barley was $2.24 per bushel, and all barley was $2.61. Steer and heifer prices were $97.40 per cwt, cow prices were $44.70, calves were $112.00 per cwt., all hog prices were $37.70 per cwt, and all egg prices were $0.70 per dozen.

The preliminary All Farm Products Index of Prices Received by Farmers in October is 113, based on 1990-92=100, 3 points above the September Index. Since last month, the Livestock & Products Index was higher while the All Crops Index was unchanged. Higher commodity prices for cattle, soybeans, dairy, and lettuce more than offset lower prices for corn, hogs, wheat, and potatoes. The seasonal change in the mix of commodities farmers sell, based on the past 3-year average, also affects the overall index. Increased average marketings of soybeans, corn, cotton, and cottonseed more than offset decreased marketings of dairy, grapes, wheat, and tobacco.

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MONTANA AVERAGE FARM PRICES RECEIVED

	Monthly Average				Change From		Mid-Month Avg.	
BASE MONTH: September 2003	MONTANA			U.S.	Prev Mo	Prev Yr	Montana	U.S.
	Sept 2002	Aug 2003	Sept 2003	Sept 2003	Aug 2003	Sept 2002	Oct 15 2003	Oct 15 2003
Winter Wheat....	3.99	3.27	3.36	3.32	+0.09	-0.63	3.16	3.14
Durum Wheat.....	4.41	4.01	4.16	3.94	+0.15	-0.25	4.05	3.90
Spring Wheat....	4.46	3.48	3.52	3.42	+0.04	-0.94	3.44	3.30
Wheat, All......	4.37	3.46	3.61	3.39	+0.15	-0.76	3.48	3.23
Barley..........	2.76	3.14	3.03	2.88	-0.11	+0.27	3.05	2.61
Feed Barley.....	2.13	1.99	2.10	2.30	+0.11	-0.03	2.12	2.24
Malt Barley.....	3.11	3.42	3.42	3.11	0	+0.31	3.43	2.80
Oats............	1.87	1.73	N/A	1.38	0	0	N/A	1.37
Alfalfa Hay.....	85.00	75.00	76.00	89.00	+1.00	-9.00	77.00	88.80
All Other Hay...	75.00	68.00	71.00	70.10	+3.00	-4.00	71.00	71.40
All Hay Baled...	83.00	73.00	75.00	84.20	+2.00	-8.00	75.00	84.40
Steer & Heifers.	76.40	86.60	90.50	89.40	+3.90	+14.10	95.40	97.40
Cows............	36.00	47.50	49.10	44.90	+1.60	+13.10	49.00	44.70
Beef Cattle.....	66.30	78.00	85.90	85.10	+7.90	+19.60	90.30	91.60
Calves..........	90.70	106.00	106.00	109.00	0	+15.30	108.00	112.00
Sheep...........	21.40	26.00	32.00	32.10	+6.00	+10.60	N/A	N/A
Lambs...........	79.10	98.10	106.00	94.70	+7.90	+26.90	N/A	N/A
All Milk........	12.00	11.70	13.00	14.40	+1.30	+1.00	14.50	14.80

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November 1 Crop Production Forecast

For immediate release: November 12, 2003
For more information please contact: Curtis Lund, Deputy State Statistician at 1-800-835-2612.

Montana **dry edible pea** production is forecast to be 381,000 cwt, up 86 percent from last year's revised estimate. Planted acreage for 2003 is estimated at 32,000 acres, the same as last year. Harvested acreage is estimated at 30,000 acres, up 3,000 acres from last year. The yield is forecast at 1,270 pounds per acre, 510 acres more than last year.

Austrian winter pea production in Montana is forecasted to be 26,000 cwt, up 6,000 cwt from last year. Harvested acreage, at 3,000 acres, is expected to be down 500 acres from last year. Planted acreage for 2003 is estimated to be 9,500 acres, unchanged from last year. The average yield is forecast to be 850 lbs per acre, up 270 lbs per acre from last year.

Lentil production in Montana is forecast to be 140,000 cwt for 2003, down 6 percent from last year. Planted acreage at 29,000 acres, is up 4,000 acres from last year. Harvested acres, at 18,000 acres, is down 3,000 acres from last year. Average yield is expected to be 780 lbs per acre, up 70 lbs from last year.

Montana **sugar beets** production was forecast at 1.305 million tons, up 19 percent from last year. Forecasted yield, of 25.0 tons per acre, is up 5.4 tons per acre from 2002. Harvested acreage is down 3,700 acres from last year to 52,200 acres.

Fall potato production in Montana is forecast to be 3.392 million cwt, up 5 percent from last year. Harvested acres are estimated at 10,600 acres, up 200 acres from last year. The yield is forecast at 320 cwt per acre, up 10 cwt per acre from the previous year.

U.S. dry edible peas production is estimated at 5.01 million cwt, up 18 percent from the 2002 estimate. Area for harvest, at 321,000 acres, is 15 percent above a year ago. Average yield is forecast at 1,560 pounds per acre, up 43 pounds from last season.

U.S. production of austrian winter peas for Idaho, Montana, and Oregon in 2003 is forecast at 144,000 cwt, down 12 percent from 2002. Area harvested is forecast at 11,600 acres, unchanged from last year. Average yield is expected to be 1,241 pounds per acre, down 173 pounds per acre from last season.

U.S. lentils production is forecast at 2.29 million cwt, down 9 percent from last year. Area for harvest is forecast at 226,000 acres, up 8 percent from the previous year. Average yield is expected to be 1,011 pounds per acre, down 189 pounds per acre from 2002.

U.S. sugar beets production is forecast at 30.6 million tons, 2 percent above the October forecast and 10 percent above last year's production. Growers in the 12 sugar beet-producing States expect to harvest 1.35 million acres. This is virtually unchanged from October but 1 percent below last year. The yield is forecast at 22.8 tons per acre,0.6 ton above last month and 2.4 tons above 2002.

U.S. fall potato production for 2003 is forecast at 414 million cwt, virtually unchanged from last year but 5 percent greater than the 2001 crop. Area harvested, at 1.09 million acres, is virtually unchanged from the July estimate but down 1 percent from last year. The average yield is forecast at 378 cwt per acre, 5 cwt above last year and 11 cwt greater than the 2001 season.

Crop contacts: Christel Pachl for Peas, Lentils, and Sugar beets; and Eric Siebens for Potatoes.

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Montana Agricultural Statistics 2003 Bulletins Available

For immediate release: November 12, 2003
For more information contact: Peggy Stringer or Curtis Lund at 1-800-835-2612.

The fortieth edition of the *Montana Agricultural Statistics 2003* bulletin is available to the public. Ralph Peck, Director of Montana Department of Agriculture, comments, "In this 40th annual edition of *Montana Agricultural Statistics* our agricultural industry will find accurate and reliable information necessary to make sound managerial decisions."

The *Montana Agricultural Statistics* bulletin is published annually and contains economic information, crop and livestock production, county-level information, Montana's rank, price information, and much more. The cost of the book is $10.00. To receive your printed copy, contact Montana Agricultural Statistics Service by phone at 1-800-835-2612 or 406-441-1240, by e-mail at nass-mt@nass.usda.gov, or write Montana Agricultural Statistics Service at 10 W. 15th St., Suite 3100, Helena, MT 59626. It is also available in electronic format on our website at www.nass.usda.gov/mt/.

Agriculture is Montana's largest industry, and it is essential that accurate agricultural data be available to producers, businesses, and agriculturally related industries. The *Montana Agricultural Statistics* bulletin provides information on agriculture to the public. Montana's farmers, ranchers, and agribusinesses made this publication possible through their willingness to provide basic agricultural information.

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Agricultural Prices Received for October 2003

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For immediate release: November 28, 2003
For more information contact: Curtis Lund at 1-800-835-2612.

October full month crop prices were mixed compared with September 2003, according to the Montana Agricultural Statistics Service. Montana's winter wheat average price was $3.55 per bushel, up $0.19 from the previous month; spring wheat moved up $0.08 to $.3.60 per bushel; but durum wheat prices dropped $0.16 to $4.00 per bushel. Feed barley prices dropped $0.03 from the previous month to $2.07, malt barley prices fell $0.20 to $3.22 per bushel.

The mid-November price for alfalfa hay was down $1.00 to $76.00 per ton and all other hay dropped $2.00 to $69.00 per ton. The mid-November grain prices were mixed from the previous month with winter wheat price averaging $3.63 per bushel; spring wheat was $3.95; durum wheat was $3.82; all barley was $2.70 and feed barley averaged $2.14.

Livestock prices for the full month of October were higher compared with the previous month. Steer and heifer prices jumped $5.70 to $96.20 per cwt which is a new record high and cows rose $0.50 to $49.60. The average price for calves was increased $1.00 to $107.00 per cwt. Sheep prices rose $3.70 to $35.70 per cwt, but lamb prices remained unchanged at $106.00 per cwt. Milk prices jumped $1.90 per cwt from last month to $14.90 per cwt. Steer and heifer prices for mid-November averaged $97.20 per cwt.; cows averaged $49.30 per cwt.; calves averaged $107.00 per cwt.; and milk prices averaged $15.30 per cwt.

Nationally, prices for October and changes from September were as follows: winter wheat was $3.37, up $0.05, spring wheat was $3.54, up $0.12; durum wheat was $3.90, down $0.04; the all barley price was $2.77, down $0.11, and steer and heifer prices were $97.80, up $8.40 per cwt.

The U.S. mid-November winter wheat price was $3.64 per bushel, spring wheat was $3.76 per bushel, durum wheat was $3.76 per bushel, all wheat was $3.69 per bushel, malt barley was $2.70 per bushel, feed barley was $2.30 per bushel, and all barley was $2.56. Steer and heifer prices were $99.70 per cwt, cow prices were $46.70, calves were $112.00 per cwt., all hog prices were $34.80 per cwt, and market egg prices were $0.926 per dozen.

The preliminary All Farm Products Index of Prices Received by Farmers in November is 117, based on 1990-92=100, 4 points (3.5 percent) above the October Index. Both the Livestock and Products Index and the All Crops Index were higher in November. Producers received higher commodity prices for cattle, corn, soybeans, and wheat. Lower prices were received for cotton, hogs, and milk. The seasonal change in the mix of commodities farmers sell, based on the past 3-year average, also affects the overall index. Increased average marketings of all milk, cotton, cattle, and cottonseed offset decreased marketings of peanuts, soybeans, sunflowers, and potatoes.

This preliminary All Farm Products Index is up 20 points (20.6 percent) from November 2002. The Food Commodities Index increased 5 points (4.3 percent) above last month to 121, and is 25 points (26.0 percent) above November 2002. This index value is the highest since records began in 1975. The November Index of Prices Paid for Commodities and Services, Interest, Taxes, and Farm Wage Rates (PPITW) is 130 percent of the 1990-92 average. The index is unchanged from October but 5 points (4.0 percent) above November 2002. Lower prices in November for feeder cattle, hay and forages, gasoline, and feeder pigs are offset by higher prices for feed grains, feed concentrates, feed supplements, and nitrogen fertilizers.

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2003 Dry Edible Bean Production

For immediate release: December 11, 2003
For more information contact: Christel Pachl or Thomas Chard at 1-800-835-2612.

Production for Montana's **dry edible bean** crop was estimated at 286,000 cwt, down 21 percent from the 2002 crop, according to the Montana Agricultural Statistics Service. Planted acreage for 2003 is estimated to be 19,000 acres, down 29 percent from last year. Harvested area for this year is 17,000 acres, 26 percent below 2002. The yield is forecast at 1,680 pounds per acre, 110 pounds better than last year.

Pinto bean production for Montana is estimated to be 254,000 cwt, which is 11 percent less than last year. Acres planted, at 13,000, are down 4 percent from 2002. Harvested acres, at 13,000, are 1 percent higher than the previous year. The yield is forecast at 1,950 pounds per acre, 250 pounds less than last year.

All chickpea (garbanzo beans) production is forecast at 28,000 cwt for 2003, down 61 percent from 2002. Planted acreage was set at 5,500 acres, down 56 percent from 2002. Harvested area is estimated at 3,700 acres, down 61 percent from 2002. The yield is forecast at 757 pounds per acre, up 2 percent from 2002. This year estimates were set for two size classes of chickpeas those smaller than 20/64 in. and those larger than 20/64 in. **Small Chickpea** (smaller than 20/64 in.) production is forecast at 14,000 cwt for 2003. Planted acreage was set at 2,500 acres. Harvested area is estimated at 1,700 acres. The yield is forecast at 820 pounds per acre. **Large Chickpea** (larger than 20/64 in.) production is forecast at 14,000 cwt for 2003. Planted acreage was set at 3,000 acres. Harvested area is estimated at 2,000 acres. The yield is forecast at 700 pounds per acre.

U.S. dry edible bean production is forecast at 22.8 million cwt for 2003, down 3 percent from the October forecast and 24 percent below last year. Harvested acreage is forecast at 1.36 million acres, 4 percent below the last forecast and down 21 percent from 2002. The average U.S. yield is forecast at 1,678 pounds per acre, an increase of 13 pounds from the October forecast but 58 pounds below a year ago. Production is below a year ago in 12 of the 18 producing States. Most notable is a 50 percent production decrease in Michigan where planted acres are the lowest on record. Also, Oregon's production is down 49 percent due to drought conditions. Production is down from a year ago for black, small white, navy, garbanzo, cranberry, small lima, dark red kidney, pinto, and light red kidney. Production increased from last year for great northern, blackeye, large lima, pink, and small red.

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